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Ritual Alliances of the Putian Plain

Volume One:

Historical Introduction to the Return of the Gods



Kenneth Dean & Zheng Zhenman

BRILL

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Ritual Alliances of the Putian Plain

Volume One: Historical Introduction
to the Return of the Gods

By

Kenneth Dean and Zheng Zhenman



B R I L L

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Cover illustration: A possessed spirit medium “plucks the flowers” of fire during a ritual in Yangwei village ©Kenneth Dean.

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This book is dedicated to the villagers of Putian, who greeted us in thousands of village temples with great courtesy and enthusiasm, and whose joy and pride in their local history, ritual traditions and community celebrations is an inspiration.

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All images © Kenneth Dean

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TIMELINE OF CHINESE DYNASTIES

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Spring and Autumn period | 770–476 BCE |
| Warring States period | 475–221 BCE |
| Qin | 221–206 BCE |
| Western Han | 206 BCE–26 CE (including the reign of Wang Mang: 9–23) |
| Eastern Han | 25–220 CE |
| Three Kingdoms | 220–265 CE |
| Wei | 220–265 CE |
| Shu | 221–263 CE |
| Wu | 222–280 CE |
| Western Jin | 265–316 CE |
| Eastern Jin | 317–420 CE |
| Sixteen Kingdoms | 304–439 CE |
| Northern and Southern Dynasties | 420–589 CE |
| Southern Dynasties | 420–589 CE |
| Song | 420–479 CE |
| Qi | 479–502 CE |
| Liang | 502–557 CE |
| Chen | 557–589 CE |
| Northern Dynasties | 386–581 CE |
| Northern Wei | 386–534 CE |
| Eastern Wei | 534–550 CE |
| Western Wei | 535–557 CE |
| Northern Qi | 550–577 CE |
| Northern Zhou | 557–581 CE |
| Sui | 581–618 CE |
| Tang | 618–907 CE |
| Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms | 907–979 CE |
| Northern Song | 960–1127 CE |
| Southern Song | 1127–1279 CE |
| Liao | 916–1125 CE |
| Jin | 1115–1234 CE |
| Yuan | 1271–1368 CE |

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Ming | 1368–1644 CE |
| Qing | 1644–1911 CE |
| Republican period | 1911–1949 CE |
| Peoples Republic | 1949– |

Dates in these volumes are sometimes given in the following format in order to save space: Dynasty, reign period, year of the reign period, (Western equivalent date in parentheses), e.g., Ming Wanli 4 (1576), rather than the more standard form of “in the 4th year of the Wanli reign-period of the Ming dynasty (1576).”

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PART ONE
THE GODS RETURN

by Kenneth Dean

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION: THE SURVEY AND ITS MAIN FINDINGS

This volume, and its companion volume, *Ritual Alliances of the Putian Plains, Part Two: A Survey of Village Temple and Ritual Activities*, document the central role of communal rituals dedicated to the popular gods in the villages of one region of contemporary Southeast China, the irrigated alluvial plain of Putian 莆田, Fujian 福建. Since the end of the Cultural Revolution and the change of official policies regarding religious activity in 1979, thousands of temples have been rebuilt, local ritual traditions have been reinvented, and esoteric rites have been slowly reassembled or improvised across the Putian plain. These volumes demonstrate the importance of these rituals dedicated to the gods by the villagers in this region by showing their distribution and frequency in every village on the plain.

We found that village temples, and ritual alliances they have formed, generate a “second government” which addresses certain local concerns more effectively than the state and its local government officials (Dean 2001). The village temples are at the center of the celebrations of the birthdays and festivals of the gods. They organize processions of villagers that trace the boundaries of their ritual territories and alliances. They hold training sessions for spirit mediums who transmit the blessings of the gods to each household in the village. Village temples also invite Daoist and other ritual specialists to perform rites inside the temple as the processions, spirit medium exorcistic dances, and opera performances go on outside. They are also important centers of local political, economic, social and moral power. The temples are living cultural centers of the villages. During idle moments, they provide a place for the elderly to gather and play cards or mahjong, while individual worshippers burn incense and present offerings to the gods, and children play. Village rituals centered on these temples are continuing to successfully negotiate the forces of capitalism and nationalism while preserving a vibrant space for the celebration of local cultural difference.

This volume is designed to provide an introduction to the survey, and to put the “return of the gods” to the Putian plains over the

past three decades into historical context. This volume begins with a chapter summarizing the survey and its main findings, including a description of the way in which the survey entries are organized. This is followed by a chapter discussing the limitations of official definitions of religion in China for an understanding of the village temples and their ritual activities, along with some suggestions for alternative approaches. Chapter Three provides a rapid overview of the historical development of aspects of the rituals one finds on the Putian plains today. Chapters Four and Five describes ritual events in contemporary Putian, and introduce the different ritual specialists who perform in them. Chapter Six introduces the principal gods and cults worshipped on the plain. Chapter Seven reviews the most prominent temples, monasteries and important village temples found on the Putian plain. Chapter Eight discusses the major lineages distributed over the plain, and presents a detailed case study of the interaction between lineage and territorial temples in Shiting village. Chapter Nine examines the Overseas Chinese connections to Southeast Asia which have brought new kinds of ritual innovation into the local culture. Chapter Ten offers some theoretical reflections on the syncretic ritual field of Chinese popular religion and the interaction of ritual and modernity in contemporary Putian. In Part Two, we present a translation of an essay entitled *Lineage and religion on the Putian plains: an analysis based on stone inscriptions*, by Zheng Zhenman, which provides more historical documentation on some key phases in the history of the local ritual system, for specialist readers. A series of appendices include the origin accounts and maps of the distributions of the main lineages of the Putian plains and a translation of a recent stone inscriptions.

This format, which first describes a survey, then outlines the history of the region, and next introduces the key elements of contemporary ritual events in the area, inevitably involves some degree of repetition, if not contradiction, for which we apologize to readers in advance. Throughout this volume we raise the question of what these complex village rites and processions tell us about the nature of ritual, community and identity in Southeast China. Chinese village rituals in this area incorporate many different liturgical frameworks and allow for multiple points of view, all the while mobilizing the entire village population into celebrations for the gods. These rites are an intensification of everyday life, featuring an acceleration of the flow of gifts and competitive displays of local power, rather than a sacred or solemn time set

apart from some mundane realm. These ritual events thus pose very interesting challenges to Western categories of religion.

An amazing resurgence of popular local religion

Villagers in Putian often joke that when Mao Zedong was on earth, he scared all the gods away to heaven. Now that Mao himself has gone to heaven, the gods have come hurrying back to earth. Nowadays it is not Red Guards who tear down temples to the popular gods. Hyper-development flattens whole villages and temples in the rush to expand cities and towns. But the gods are still important to local people, and their rituals are at the center of a struggle for relative local autonomy and cultural self-definition. Since 1979, with the ending of the Cultural Revolution and the beginning of the economic reforms of Deng Xiaoping, a massive resurgence and re-invention of local ritual traditions, perhaps the greatest in history, has taken place across China. We estimate that over a million village temples have been rebuilt or restored across China, and ritual traditions long thought lost are now being celebrated in many of these temples.¹ These are the temples of Chinese local popular religion, although as we will see below, this term is problematic. This figure does not include the tens of thousands of large scale Buddhist monasteries, Daoist monasteries and temples, Islamic mosques, or Christian churches (Catholic or Protestant) that were rebuilt or restored over the past three decades. In other words, these village temples do not easily fit into the five officially recognized

¹ According to one recent count China currently has a total number of 680,000 administrative villages. Statement by Yu Zhan, Vice Director of the Chinese Association for Promoting Township and Village Development, quoted in the *Peoples' Daily Online* on May 30, 2005. Cite last accessed 4/25/2009. http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200505/30/eng20050530_187563.html. Administrative villages often include from one to several natural villages. Reports on villages from many regions of China suggest that it is reasonable to assume an average of two temples per village (see the summaries in Overmyer, 2000 of several hundred field reports published in Lagerwey, et al., (1994-) and Wang Chiu-kuei, (1993-). If we assume an average village population of 1000, we arrive at a figure of over 680 million villagers involved in some way with over a million temples and their rituals. It should be noted however that in some areas of China temples have only very rarely been rebuilt since 1949. This can be attributed to local poverty and complex local political conditions, amongst other local historical factors. Recent in-depth anthropological and historical studies dealing with the revival of temples in recent decades in different parts of China include Dean (1993, 1998), Jing (1996), Chao (2006) and Dubois (2005).

religions of China (Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism). In many areas these village temples have been classified as Daoist by the local offices of the Religious Affairs Bureau.

China's towns and cities have been the main centers of political control, rapid economic transformation, and secularization over the past fifty years since the founding of the People's Republic. The once active temples and ritual activities of these towns and cities have, for the most part, been closed down or museumified, generating a growing gulf between the experiences of urban as opposed to rural Chinese.² The situation is very different in the rural sector. The numbers of village temples and the extent of their ritual activities have grown rapidly over the past thirty years. A substantial amount of the money remitted by the 200 million strong "floating population" of rural workers in urban construction sites and factories around China to their home villages supports the ritual activities documented in this book. While the stereotypical images of China under the Cultural Revolution slowly die away in the minds of outside observers, they have mostly been replaced by images of hyper-development in urban settings like Beijing and Shanghai. The everyday life of rural China and its ritual underpinnings remains scarcely understood. The role of local ritual traditions in this daily life is the subject of this book.

This book provides an in-depth introduction to the socio-cultural historical background and a survey of contemporary ritual activities in the irrigated alluvial plain which formed along the Xinghua 興化 bay of Putian county in Fujian province in Southeast China.³ This plain extends from Putian city in the east to the Xinghua Bay on the west, and to the north and south of the Mulan 木蘭 river, covering a total of 464 sq. km. The book presents a survey of the population, principal lineages, temples and ritual celebrations that take place in 724 villages

² A research project begun by Kristofer Schipper and continued by Marianne Bujard of the EFEO on the Sacred City of Beijing has estimated that there were over 1,000 temples active in Beijing in late imperial times, and concluded that these temples acted as the real city government of Beijing (Bujard, 2007). See also Naquin (2000) and Goossaert (2007).

³ Putian county and Xianyou county make up the Xinghua region. The three million residents speak Puxianhua, a local dialect which is quite distinct from Minnan (Southern Min, Hokkien) dialect spoken just south of the Xinghua region or the Fuzhou dialect spoken to the north of the region. The Xinghua region is made up of mountains leading to the Putian coastal plain. The Lai river, also known as the Mulan river, runs along a narrow valley through Xianyou county, and then crosses Putian county on the way to the Xinghua Bay.

gathered into 153 ritual alliances situated on this plain. The introduction and survey are complemented by over 200 maps showing the historical evolution of the reclaimed land from the Xinghua bay, the distribution of the irrigation system, the position of the villages within each of the regional ritual alliances, and the distribution of major lineages and principal cults to popular deities.⁴

Ritual traditions and village based ritual in Southeast China display extraordinary complexity and vitality. We argue that this unexpected role for ritual in contemporary Chinese everyday life in this area is the result of the development of a multi-layered syncretic ritual field that can be analyzed historically. These evolving rituals have been an important factor in social organization historically, and they continue to play a crucial role in this area in contemporary China. We argue that the state and its officials and the lineages and their scholar-literati elites were not the only, nor necessarily the most important, agents of local social change and control. Instead, we emphasize the role of village temple and lineage leaders in creatively adapting and mutating various state institutions and ideas, along with lineage ideology and practice, into sources of ritual change at the local level. They worked these cultural appropriations into a volatile and vital mix with local cults and ritual practices, which often involved spirit mediumism or spirit-writing. Of course, these temple leaders may also have been retired officials or scholar-literati with significant roles in local lineages, but their roles and powers within the temple committees were affected by practices of the rotation of responsibility and committee membership with all eligible married village males, and by the principle of collective decision making. These procedures ensured the expression of many different voices in the temple committees of the Putian plains. This too helps explain the ability of Putian villagers to continue to develop such a unique cultural ensemble of practices.

The contemporary flourishing of ritual activity should therefore be seen as part of a long history of local control and management of local resources, dating back at least to the mid-Ming (mid-16th century). At that time, multi-village ritual alliances began to spread across the entire

⁴ The term cult is here used in its original root sense of *cultus*, “to reverence”. The use of this term throughout this volume is not intended to refer in any pejorative way to “heterodox cults” or “evil cults” in the sense with which this term has been used in recent popular sociological literature. For a discussion of these issues see ter Haar, 1992.

Putian irrigated plain, and rituals specific to these regional organizations were developed. This process took almost two hundred years to complete. Eventually, the plain was covered with alliances of independent natural villages,⁵ each of which held their own rituals and processions for the gods in their own temples. The allied villages organized joint processions and rituals in higher-order, collectively managed central temples. There were multiple origins for these alliances—some formed to collectively manage the complex local irrigation systems, others formed when official altars to the soil and the harvest that had merged with local god temples branched out into newly settled villages. Others formed in reaction to the proliferation of these alliances, or to protect themselves against dominant localized lineages.

Over several hundred years, a new form of local power began to evolve within the ritual alliances of the Putian plains. The temples and their alliances were able to mobilize the entire populations of the allied villages. They channeled considerable resources into the performance of local power, as seen in great processions and massive celebrations held in higher-order central temples. This was a new kind of “ritual power formation”, which differed from the forms and flows of power within more isolated individual villages. The greater scale of the regional alliances required ritual events of greater intensity and complexity, involving more complex modes of regional local management and control of resources, and the mobilization of multiple village populations.

The mid-Ming also marks the moment when the local irrigation systems reached the limits of their physical expansion. These systems nevertheless were relied upon to provide for ever expanding local populations. These are complex systems, which work to regulate the flows of coastal tides and the distribution of fresh water through the plain, and which require elaborate and continuous monitoring, maintenance, and regular repair. The ritual alliances became the centers of irrigation maintenance. Over time, the ritual alliances were able to interact with,

⁵ Natural village, or *zirancun* 自然村, is the local term for independent villages surrounded by rice paddies and vegetable fields, or by orchards and hills. The average population of the villages of the Putian plain is approximately 1,000 residents. Houses tend to be built side by side, with narrow lanes and alleys in between rows of houses. Most families have a small courtyard, but a larger public space is found in front of the village temple, and it is here that rice is threshed and dried after the harvest. Some older and larger villages have a short segment of paved road for temporary markets. In recent years, villages in this area have undergone extensive reconstruction.

absorb, and in some cases go beyond the power of locally dominant lineages. This was a long process, which coincided with a general trend on the part of the late Ming and Qing state to download more responsibility for local governance onto local leadership. Meanwhile, society in Southeast China was becoming increasingly commercialized, and the temple alliances offered opportunities for the display of wealth in a socially acceptable form. Over this period, the lineages of the Putian plains also became more commercialized and transformed in many ways, merging in many areas with the temple organizations. During the late Ming and the Ming Qing transition (late 16th–mid 17th centuries), the Putian region was troubled by large scale pirate invasions, dynastic wars, and massive coastal evacuations enforced by the Manchu court. All these disruptions accelerated the dispersal of lineages in the Putian plains, contributing to the current situation in which less than a third of villages are single surname villages.⁶

The village temples, ritual alliances and lineages of the Putian plains suffered through a century of state-led attacks in the name of modernization under the Republican period and in the first decades of the People's Republic. Over the past thirty years, however, the temple committees and regional ritual alliances of the Putian plains have regrouped and formed what might be called "China's second government". These organizations fulfill many functions of local self-governance (Dean 2001). The temple committees raise considerable funding by collecting a set small amount from every household on a per capita basis (except for those Christian households that refuse to participate). Wealthy individuals are expected to contribute substantial funds to display their wealth and status and to reinvest in the community. All funds collected and dispersed are posted on the temple walls for all to see. The main expenses are for opera performances, ritual specialists, and the costs of the processions and rites. Extra funds are spent on many projects, such as sponsoring local infrastructure work, laying roads, building toilets, providing electric lighting, sponsoring cultural events (rituals invariably include operatic performances), sponsoring scholarships, dispensing charity, medicine, food and clothing, and providing a cultural center for the community. Opportunities for

⁶ This situation is quite different from that of the villages of the Pearl River delta in Guangdong, as discussed in Freedman 1970 and Faure 1986, 2007. As the local culture of South China has received the most sustained social historical research in recent scholarship, comparisons will frequently be drawn to developments in Putian.

leadership and management training are provided by the rotation of (primarily male) members of the temple committees, usually based on age and marital status in the village. There is a place for the display of status through individual contributions to village rituals, but there is also scope for the display of moral rectitude, regardless of one's wealth, on the part of all those who take part in the rites. Equally, if not more important, the celebrations allow for all kinds of excitement, fun and chaotic tumult.

“Traditional” practices in this part of China are not in flight before an encroaching, all encompassing modernity. On the contrary, the temple leaders who organize rituals in this region have shown a remarkable ability to negotiate the forces of modernity, whether from the state or from capital flows, incorporating these forces without distorting the celebrations into commercialized tourist spectacles or state-sponsored nationalist displays of “local cultural folklore”. This survey documents conclusively the resurgence and growth of popular religious ritual activity in Southeast China since the end of the Cultural Revolution. The survey also highlights the role of Overseas Chinese returning to help sponsor and participate in local ritual traditions and to invest in the rebuilding of temples and the performance of spectacular rituals. Many Putian villagers emigrated to Southeast Asia at the end of the 19th and in the early 20th century. Some of them set up branch temples overseas of their village temple from the Putian plains. The survey shows the degree to which these transnational temple networks have revived from the late 1980's onwards. These networks, which are often led by spirit medium groups, have become very active in the past thirty years. Many of these spirit mediums are also very successful Overseas Chinese businessmen. The Overseas Chinese played an extremely important role in the revival of local culture in the years just after the Cultural Revolution, and continue to play an important role in some village rituals, but in fact, the vast majority of ritual events currently performed in the region are organized and funded locally. This is, after all, a region which has seen extraordinary economic growth over the past three decades.

Ritual Alliances

As mentioned above, the ritual alliances of the Putian plains are groups of villages which perform regular common rituals, share a higher order

temple with a temple committee made up of representatives of each village in the alliance, and organize annual (or longer temporal cycles) processions of the gods through each of the villages in the alliance. These alliances are based in higher order temples. The gods of these temples are borrowed by smaller temples for rituals held there, or else they are formally received by these temples when they are carried in processions around the villages of the alliance. The ritual alliances spread across the plains from the 16th through the 18th century as different groups of multi-lineage villages formed coalitions. By the end of the 19th century, when the irrigation systems were in sharp decline, the ritual alliances transformed into competing banner coalitions that feuded amongst themselves over access to water rights. Over this long period of time, the ritual alliances took on many functions, including irrigation system maintenance, local displays of power in ritual events, local infrastructure (roads, bridges, village sanitation), charity, education, and local defense. Certain of these functions have been reclaimed by the ritual alliances since the beginning of the 1980's.

The ritual alliances of the Putian plains have some similarities with the village alliances described by Brim (1974) in the New Territories of Hong Kong. Brim claimed that the village alliances of the New Territories were deeply rooted in local level social structure. He described them as multi-lineage defensive alliances, and as para-political organizations that settle local and cross-boundary disputes with a formal legal code. They were also para-military organizations with formal militia units, who fought over land rent and the control of markets, and who could form military allegiances between alliances. Their functions included primarily defense, insurance, crop patrols, and irrigation maintenance. These alliances were also based in higher order temples, often in open country, which offered a wider range of ritual services than smaller, village temples. Large collective rites were held on the birthdays of the main gods of these temples, and every ten years a great Daoist *Jiao* 醮 ritual would be held. These rituals featured fighting over firework displays.⁷

⁷ Several of the higher order temples representing larger alliances of several multi-village ritual alliances on the Putian plain used to hold major rites and processions at regular intervals (every three, twelve, or sixty years). The increased economic prosperity of the region has led some of these long cycles to be sped up considerably. Thus the Temple of the Eastern Peak in Jiangkou on the northern coast of the Putian plain has held massive processions three times in the last fifteen years, rather than once every sixty years as had been the case in the Qing and Republican periods.

Faure (1986) argued that rather than treat the village alliances as static reflections of social structure, it is necessary to historicize them. He showed that the alliances arose in the 19th century, only after the decline of lineage control over many regions of the New Territories, and that the alliances differed considerably in their functions and historical development. Chun (2003) discussed the ongoing transformations of the nature and functions of the village alliances, when British control had rendered their defensive functions moot, and after WWII, forces of globalization had further affected them. By the 1980's they had changed into public spectacles, with little connection to their earlier social functions. Chun suggests that such changing social forms and functions should be understood in relation to shifting social milieus, changing local moral economies, and transformations at the level of broader societal disciplinary strategies.

The ritual alliances of the Putian plains also should be viewed from multiple perspectives, sociological, historical, and cultural, as they evolved over time and as they continue to transform in response to forces of globalization. Clearly, they underwent a different historical process of evolution than in southern Guangdong and the New Territories. They arose earlier (16th century). They merged more intricately over the next several hundred years with lineage formations that were also expanding and transforming. They too developed defensive, militaristic dimensions in the 19th century, but they maintained other functions as well. Most surprisingly of all, they have survived attempts from the 1950's through the 1970's to impose homogenous political control over local culture.⁸ They have instead emerged resilient. What is more, they have so far not transformed into "public spectacles" such as those described by Chun (2003), despite having to negotiate extremely volatile forces of the market. In general, one major difference with the New Territories or the Pearl River delta of Guangdong (Faure 1986, 2007) lies in the local transformations of the lineages, which merged with the ritual alliances rather than remaining separate, or superseding them, or being replaced by them. The ritual alliances and the village temples continue to function as the main centers of cultural life today in the Putian plains.

⁸ One could argue that the attacks on these local cultural forms began in the late Qing and were carried forward throughout the Republican period (see further details in the historical overview below).

The gods worshipped in the village temples include a wide range of deified historical figures, some nationally known, but many known only in the village in which they are worshipped. There are also a broad range of nature deities, gods absorbed from popular myth, legend and fiction, along with many Buddhist gods, Daoist deities and immortals, or Confucian sages. Each distinct cultural region of China (often distinguished by a unique local dialect, style of architecture, cuisine, musical and theatrical traditions) will have its own unique local pantheon, combining locally invented deities with more widely worshipped gods. While the local pantheons of northern China generally select between some 300 deities, many of classical origin, the local pantheons of south China are far more open to local innovation. The villagers in the Putian area worship over 1000 gods, over half of whom are local deities. Many of these highly local gods are worshipped in a single village, or at most within several villages in a ritual alliance.

For the Western reader, it may be helpful to compare the situation in Putian with that of ancient Greece, prior to the homogenization and standardization of the Olympian family melodrama of the gods, when the same god was often understood and worshipped very differently in different Grecian cities and cult sanctuaries (Larson 2007:3). Another point of comparison would be to the cults of the medieval Christian saints, some of whom were regarded as having special protective powers over their cult centers (Wilson 1983). As we will see, the festivals of the gods of rural China are times of carnival and celebration. These ritual events are an intensification of both the ritualized basis as well as the joys and pleasures of everyday life. The communal rituals of the Putian plains are colorful, noisy, crowded, and exciting. They are exceedingly *renao* (hot and tumultuous). The largest ritual events during the *Yuanxiao* 元宵 festival involve spectacular processions of the gods, spirit mediums in trance, opera performances, Buddhist, Daoist, and/or Three in One rites,⁹ great arrays of food offerings in the temples (along with prepared tables of offerings in front of each household),

⁹ The Three in One religious movement was founded in Putian by Lin Zhao'en 林兆恩 (1517–1598). This movement combines Confucian self-cultivation, Daoist inner alchemy, and Buddhist meditation. The Three in One movement has built over 1,000 temples in Putian and Xianyou counties. They have developed a parallel ritual tradition to that of local Daoist ritual masters and Buddhist monks. Exceptionally elaborate ritual in Putian involve the performance of parallel rituals by any combination of Daoists masters, Buddhist monks, and Three in One Scripture Masters. For more background on the Three in One movement, see Dean (1998).

visits to the temple by a ceaseless stream of individual worshippers and delegations from nearby allied villages, musical performances by a competing array of performers including military brass bands, traditional instrumental ensembles, all female drum cart and cymbal troupes, loudspeakers broadcasting all kinds of music and announcements, and a cacophony of fireworks of all shapes and sizes. These ritual events involve the mobilization of the entire village community, or the populations of multiple villages—every one of whom has a ritual role to play. These roles change over the course of an individual's life from carrying lanterns or bowing with incense as a child, to carrying the sedan chairs of the gods or preparing household offerings as a teenager, to (for the men) taking a turn as a member of the temple management committee once one has married and had a child, to a position as a village elder after reaching fifty-five or sixty—along the way some also become spirit mediums or ritual specialists, opera stars or marionettists, temple accountants or masters of ceremonies. Some, like young to middle aged business leaders, may appear too busy to participate directly, but they are likely to contribute additional individual funds beyond the set per-capita amount that is collected by the temple committee prior to each ritual. As mentioned above, all these accounts are posted on red sheets of paper on the temple walls shortly after the ritual for all to check and confirm.¹⁰

The historical overview provided below emphasizes that each new historical level of ritual form (early god cults, Buddhist and Daoist rites, spirit possession, ancestral worship, multi-village processions, Three in One self-cultivation and ritual practice, collective spirit medium group dance) interacted with earlier levels to create a complex and growing set of cultural and ritual resources and a range of techniques for the mobilization and management of village communities and the invocation and application of cosmological forces. Rather than superseding, negating, or contradicting earlier layers of ritual forms, these different techniques of the performance of social and cosmological power continued to build up new mixed forms and potentialities for local social and cultural change.

Throughout the history of the villages of Putian, we find evidence of local collective experimentation with new ritual traditions. Some of

¹⁰ We have collected over 5,000 posted temple ritual accounts, which we plan to present and analyze in a forthcoming publication.

these rituals are based in local and possibly indigenous myths, legends, and practices. Others are inventive adaptations of state ritual forms and ideas. For example, experiments with lineage ideology and ritual form was an early feature of Xinghua society, beginning in the Song dynasty (Clark, 2007). Lineages spread widely in the Ming, but by the Qing the broader tendency was for the transformation of the lineage form from within by its merger with capitalist forces into a kind of contractual lineage, a sort of joint stock corporation (Zheng, 2001).¹¹ Even while some lineages continued to grow in power, the overall trend in the Putian plains was towards the dispersal, or merging, of the lineage into territorial ritual groupings. The latter development was part of a general trend from kinship ties to territorial ties expressed in ritual alliances. The complexity of the interaction of many factors meant that cultural ritual innovations could occur unintentionally or as a process of trial and error, and yet spread rapidly across the entire evolving, open cultural system.

In order to comprehend just how lineage forms and temple alliances could interact over time in Putian, it is necessary to examine the historical layers of contemporary ritual events in Putian. The historical overview below begins with a description of the changing physical environment due to the reclaiming of land from the sea and the establishment of several irrigation systems. Next the rise of Buddhist monastic estates and their rites for the dead is examined. This is followed by a discussion of the beginnings of lineage formation, early ancestral halls and ancestral worship in the late Song, and the spread of the lineage form in the early Ming. The historical overview then examines the mutation of early Ming *li* sub-cantons and their *shè* 社 altars of the soil and the harvest into the kernel of a new mode of local regional ritual alliances, centered in the temples of the popular gods. One can readily imagine the involvement of lineage leaders in such a process.

We also suggest below that the rise of regional ritual alliances may have been the result of “ecological feedback” from an increasingly complex and interconnected irrigation system which enforced modes of collective cooperation from “irrigation-communities” drawing

¹¹ Later lineages experimented with new forms of organization more closely resembling transnational joint stock corporations in which membership or “shares” in the lineage could be purchased regardless of kinship and the lineage could invest in adopted sons who could be sent overseas as a form of speculation. See Zheng 2001.

water from the same system of canals. The Single Whip tax reforms in the mid and late Ming, along with the pirate raids and inter-dynastic disturbances of the late Ming and early Qing, led to a downloading of responsibility over the maintenance of local infrastructure to local elites, many of whom would have been lineage leaders, who increasingly joined in the management of temples, regional ritual alliances, and higher order ritual territories as a base for the mobilization of human and physical resources necessary for system wide maintenance of the irrigation system. Whatever its origins, the constantly evolving network of ritual alliances of hundreds of village temples formed an unstable but expanding zone of relative local autonomy in the late Ming and the Qing. Even today one could argue that these networks establish zones of temporary, relative autonomy during the performance of rituals.

Why Ritual?

One might reasonably ask why ritual is the focus of these volumes, and in what ways it functions as the preferred site for the merging of political, economic, social and cultural forces in contemporary Fujian. The rituals discussed in this volume, and documented in the survey volume, are all communal village celebrations. They include village and ritual alliance celebration held during Chinese New Years (especially the Lantern Festival) and other annual communal festivals such as the *Xiayuan Pudu* (Rite of Universal Deliverance of the Lower Prime) held in the Putian area on lunar 10/15, rather than on the more usual date of *Zhongyuan* (Middle Prime) on lunar 7/15. The birthdays of the gods which are celebrated communally occur throughout the year. Thus these volumes do not discuss individual or family based rites, and only occasional mention is made of lineage based ancestral rites (which are far less common in this area than celebrations of the gods).

The communal village rituals which are the focus of these volumes are an especially significant object of study because they mobilize the entire village community. Each member of the village has a part to play in the overall ritual event. Each household contributes a set small amount on a per capita basis to the temple committee. Wealthy individuals contribute substantial amounts to display their wealth and status and to reinvest in the community. As mentioned above, the temple committees and ritual alliances form a second gov-

ernment, responding more rapidly and effectively to local needs than the local government. The ritual events organized by the temple committees are part of a long history of local self-management that can be traced over time. The techniques of management and mobilization were developed in many different institutions, including the lineage in its many forms, the schooling of village children for the imperial examination system, and the collective training of spirit mediums and altar associates. This ability to mobilize entire village populations into processions and celebrations has a deep relationship to the success of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in mobilizing village populations for dramatic struggle sessions in the early phases of the land reform movement, and throughout the processes of the collectivization of farms, the development of communes, and the factional battles of the Cultural Revolution. Ritual events are expressions of local cultural self-definition, which draw upon and creatively appropriate imperial or state symbols and ritual forms, mixing and combining them with local mediumistic and other ritual traditions. The last thirty years have shown the power of these processes of local self-expression, as homogenous state-imposed cultural forms have been replaced by communal celebrations.

The successful staging and performance of a festival commemorating the gods is the performance of local power. This is not only a symbolic expression of power, rather, the material activities involved in the gathering of funds, organization of tasks, preparations of food offerings and costumes, decorating of altars, and the composition of ritual documentation are themselves concrete workings of power and desire, including aesthetic desire, sensory desire for the stimulation and mixing of the senses in ritual events, and desire for fun and companionship and celebration of community. Rituals directly invest these desires into material expressions. The ritual events documented in these volumes involve the simultaneous performance of activities that trace several concentric circles or loopings of activity: 1) processions that can last several days involving hundreds of villagers starting out from the village temples and then tracing the boundaries of their ritual territories and alliances; 2) visits to each household in the village by smaller processions of the gods carried in sedan chairs along with spirit mediums possessed by the gods, met with elaborate food offerings, incense, and fireworks; 3) complex rites performed in the temples by Daoist and other ritual specialists while opera, including necessarily ritual opera, is performed on stages facing the temple; 4) visits to the

temple by individual worshippers bearing offerings, burning incense and spirit money, and setting off firecrackers, along with more formal visits from neighboring or allied villages, with processions of musicians and temple committee representatives; 5) musical performances by traditional ritual ensembles of *shiyin bayue* 十音八樂 (ten sounds (of string and wind instruments) and eight (percussion) instruments) or *dachui* 大吹 shawm ensembles in one corner of the temple courtyard; 6) competing performances in the courtyard of marionettes or puppets or marching bands or disco dancers or popular singers; 7) a corner of the courtyard is often set aside for cooking, as the entire scene is a setting for transformations of many kinds, in this case of food into energy and sensory stimulation. Such ritual events have often been viewed as an expression of other, more important determining or underlying forces, such as social or religious values, or the working out of social conflicts. But it is important to examine ritual in itself as a material activity embodying and working local desires and local power.

Even from a more conventional notion of power (see the critique of such approaches in Geertz, 1980:122), the staging of rituals, including processions, possession by the gods, Daoist rites and opera performances, is a contest of wills with state authorities. While the latter now are usually content to assist with public security, the past few decades have involved endless struggles, negotiations and confrontations over the size and scale and route of the rituals and their processions. Currently, a sort of steady-state phase has been achieved in the Putian plains, where processions do not seek to expand beyond traditional (meaning here Republican period) scope and scale (with some interesting exceptions).

These ritual events do not only struggle for space with the state. They are also described in local terms as *yingshen saihui* 迎神賽會 (competitive gatherings to attract the gods), in other words, holding competitions with neighboring villages and alliances to: 1) demonstrate their wealth and cohesiveness through setting off mountains of fireworks, inviting the best opera troupes, acquiring elaborate costumes for their processions, and throwing spectacular feasts for friends and outside invitees; 2) stake a claim over territory through processions tracing their boundaries, during which they often veer into the territory of neighboring alliances in a show of bravado; 3) show off their support from the gods by staging elaborate performances of parallel rites by different troupes of ritual specialists and by training a group of spirit

mediums who can transmit the intentions of the gods in dramatic trance sessions; 4) display their martial prowess and their strength of numbers in processions and through the crowds they attract to their celebrations and feasts; 5) demonstrate their relative status and seniority by claiming privileged positions in collective processions and by formally inviting and hosting representatives of neighboring villages to their festivals. Despite the competitive nature of these actions, there is considerable respect for maintaining the scale and order of the system of ritual alliances. Only within these systems do such assertions of status make sense.

Related Research

There is a glaring lack of surveys of temples and ritual activity in different parts of China. W.A. Grootaers (1948, republished in 1995) compiled three surveys of temples in northern China during the 1940s but since then there has been little systematic research of this nature on contemporary Chinese religion and local history. Sidney Gamble included some discussion of village temples in his socio-economic study of Dingxian (Gamble 1963, 1968), also conducted in the 1940s. The past few years have seen renewed publications on religion in North China. Jing Jun described the re-invention of localized Confucian ritual traditions in Gansu (Jing 1996). Thomas Dubois analyzed village level religion and sectarian ritual traditions in Northeast China (Dubois 2005). Stephen Jones documented local ritual traditions and ritual musical performance traditions in several areas of North China (Jones, 2007). Daniel Overmyer and Fan Lizhu (Ou Danian 2006–2007) edited reports on temple fairs and ritual activities in four counties of the North China plain, and Overmyer has summarized this fieldwork in an overview volume (Overmyer 2009). David Johnson examined a range of unique communal rituals performed in the past in Shanxi (Johnson, 2009).

Over the past two decades, John Lagerwey, Yang Yanjie and Tam Wai-lun, et al., have edited a series of several hundred field reports in Chinese in over 30 volumes entitled *Kejia chuantong shehui congshu* 客家傳統社會叢書 (*Traditional Hakka Society Series*). This series covers village and town temple and lineage rituals in primarily Hakka regions of southwest Fujian, northeast Guangdong, and southern Jiangxi, as well as in non-Hakka regions of Guangdong and Fujian

(Lagerwey, et al., 1994–2009). These volumes provide extensive and very valuable information about lineages, temples, festivals, rituals and processions, and Daoist ritual traditions in the villages described. However, this project is explicitly described as an exercise in “salvage anthropology”, with the intention of recording the recollections about ritual life of elders in these communities before these cultural memories are lost. Since these volumes primarily collect historical recollections of village elders, they seldom provide specific historical dates. Thus it is sometimes difficult to assess whether the activities described continue to be practiced in the villages and towns mentioned, or when they ceased, or whether they have been revived. There is also little clear sense of the geographical criteria for the selection of sites, although recent volumes in the series select sites on the basis of economic considerations (marketing hierarchies) or political administrative factors (county seats and townships). These caveats aside, the series provides invaluable data, and recent monographs have become more focused on contemporary field reports.¹²

A second important publication series dedicated to contemporary Chinese popular religion are the 120 volumes of the *Minsu quyi congshu* 民俗曲藝叢書 [*Studies in Chinese Ritual, Theatre and Folklore*], edited by Wang Ch'iu-kuei, and published in Taipei by the Shih Ho Cheng Folk Culture Foundation (Wang, ed., 1993–). This series includes many detailed reports on local ritual activities in fifteen provinces of China. Overmyer (2000) provides summaries and critiques of many of the volumes in this series. The series includes field reports, collections of primary sources, play scripts or ritual texts, monographs, and collections of research papers. One focus of the series has been on different regional forms of Mulian opera. Another focus has been on ritual drama, especially masked exorcistic *Nuo* drama 鬼戲. Several individual volumes make an outstanding contribution to the study of Chinese ritual and drama. In some cases, however, there is not enough contextualization of the performance of specific rituals or ritual dramas. Wang Ch'iu-kuei has also edited a third series of publications focusing

¹² See Daniel Overmyer and Fan Lizhu's four volumes of studies of ritual activities in Northern Chinese villages (Ou Danian, ed., 2007) and Overmyer's forthcoming volume based on these studies, entitled *Local Religion in North China in the Twentieth Century: The Structure and Organization of Community Rituals and Beliefs*. Leiden: E.J. Brill. 2009. See also Paul Katz's two volume co-edited collections of studies from Zhejiang (Xu and Kang, ed. 2005; Lian and Kang, eds. 2005).

on ritual traditions (Daoist, Buddhist, and mixed liturgical traditions) in several provinces of China. The projected twenty volumes of Wang Chiu-kuei, ed., *Zhongguo chuantong keyi huibian* 中國傳統科儀彙編 (*Collection of Traditional Chinese Ritual Texts*), published in Taipei by Hsinwenfeng, (Wang ed., 1996–), provides even more detailed introductions to local Daoist ritual specialists and ritual traditions in several different parts of China and includes extensive and invaluable reproductions of their entire liturgical manuscript collections.

A fourth important recent series of publications are the multi-volume series on Chinese regional drama, music and dance compiled on a province by province basis as part of the *Shida jicheng* 十大集成 (*Ten Great Compendiums*) by the Chinese Academy of Arts and published in different series in 1990. The series most relevant to this discussion include the *Zhongguo xiquzhi* 中國戲曲志 (*Chinese opera monographs*) Beijing, Wenhua yishu chubanshe, 1990, and other series such as the *Zhongguo mingjian gequ jicheng*, 中國民間歌曲集成 (*Anthology of Chinese folk-songs*) Beijing, Renmin yinyue chubanshe, 1990. Each of these series is arranged by province, and provides extensive information about particular rituals, ritual traditions, or regional traditions of ritual practice across most of China. However, information is not presented systematically in the *Ten Great Compendiums*, which tends to divide up elements of the same performance into different volumes—for example, ritual music is often separated from ritual dance. Nonetheless, these compendia provide extensive clues to surviving traditions of ritual performance across many parts of China.

The Survey

This study of ritual activity on the Putian plain situates itself in relation to these earlier publications.¹³ Rather than attempting to cover a very large area, or to follow variations of ritual or performative traditions across different regions, we focus on a geographically contained but culturally rich area. We attempt to survey every village on this plain. The survey fills a hole in collective knowledge about Chinese popular

¹³ A final area of research with which this study is in dialogue is the literature on *jisiquan* 祭祀圈 (ritual spheres), conducted primarily in Taiwan, but also in different parts of China in recent years (see the overview of this literature in Zhang 1996; see also Zheng and Chen 2003).

religion by providing first hand empirical evidence of the complexity and multiple layers of popular ritual activity in one specific region of contemporary China. These materials fully document a hitherto largely unknown dimension of cultural life in contemporary China.¹⁴

At a methodological level, this survey is designed to confront the limitations of the single village anthropological study by revealing the entire range of different kinds of villages, modes of ritual organization, and types of ritual specialists available within a set geographical region (in this case the 464 sq. km. of the irrigated alluvial Putian plain). This focus on spatial distribution of a wide range of socio-cultural forms is facilitated through the use of GIS (Geographic Information System) tools, which make it possible to map and analyze the distribution of particular cultural and geographic features across the entire area. This approach enables one to outline the contours and distribution of a local pantheon, distinct from that of other regions of China, and to present hypotheses on the evolution of this local pantheon over time. This emphasis on the importance of spatial location also leads to a new way of approaching local documents, including the writings of local literati, which should have important consequences for the field of Chinese studies. The essay by Zheng Zhenman translated in Part Two is an example of this approach to locally situated texts.

This study builds upon earlier fieldwork conducted independently by the authors that led to studies of the transformations of lineage formations in Ming and Qing Fujian (Zheng 2000), analysis of Daoist ritual and popular cults in the Minnan region (Dean 1998), and exploration of the ritual traditions of the Three in One in the Xinghua region (Dean 2003). Methodologically speaking, this book presents a model for studies of Chinese local history through its combination of a cultural geographical approach to a specific geographic area (incorporating GIS technology), anthropological fieldwork (surveys, participant observation in rituals, and interviews), religious studies approaches to the study of liturgies, rituals, and iconography, and historical analysis of local documents (stelae, posted accounts, scriptures and liturgies, lineage genealogies, and mediumistic chants and talismans) discovered during the research.

¹⁴ A subsequent publication is planned in Chinese that will include posted temple ritual accounts, the texts of post 1949 stone inscriptions, and an analysis of the ritual economy of the region. An interactive website is also planned. Interested readers may also want to see the documentary film *Bored in Heaven*, Dean (2009).

Territorial and administrative terms found in the survey

The survey is arranged according to regional ritual alliances and the *cun* 村 (natural villages) which make them up. These *cun* are independent settlements, usually surrounded by rice-paddy fields or fruit trees. Villages range in population from several hundred to several thousand people. Some of the villages in the survey have expanded and merged with neighbouring villages, so that only locals know the boundaries of their village's ritual territory. With the spread of roads, factories, and urban space, many villages have built three storey buildings with shopfronts along the roads that pass nearby them. Sometimes the buildings can be several rows deep, lining the main road. Most are concrete structures covered with white tiles or whitewashed. The landscape of Putian has been transformed by these roadside constructions, so that there is a serious hardening of the transportation arteries underway, giving the impression of a spreading spiderweb of modern matchbox apartment blocks, interspersed with larger factories. Leaving the roadways through doorways marked with the names of villages, one quickly re-enters rural space, although the villages are now a mix of modern concrete and brick structures, three, four or even six stories high, and older, large two story farmhouses built of pounded earthen walls, stone foundations, and wooden beams. The remaining older homes often have balconies and painted tiled decorative motifs on their facades.

Currently, throughout China, natural villages are governed by what are called *xingzheng cun* 行政村 Administrative Villages. These are collections of one to several villages, usually with a total population of around 2000–3000 people, that are administered by management committees made up of local officials, some elected, who make decisions about the uses of village lands, collect fees, and serve as representatives of state policy at the village level. In the survey we indicate the administrative village to which each natural village belongs.

From very earlier times, village communities in China were referred to as *li* 里. This term was used in the Song for a much larger administrative regions below the level of *xian* 縣 (county, or district), although it remained in use for natural villages as well. In the early years of the Ming dynasty, the term was redefined once again, this time to refer to re-grouped communities of 110 families, made up in theory of ten *jia* 甲 units of ten households each, with an additional ten households of community leaders, one for each *jia* unit. Each of these *li* was also

a ritual unit, with its own officially sanctioned *shejitan* 社稷壇 altar to the soil and the harvest, and its *litan* 厽壇 altar to the unrequited dead.¹⁵ Brook (1985) proposed naming the *li* administrative regions as “sub-cantons”. Putian county was divided in the early Ming into some thirty-three *li* sub-cantons. The Putian plains were divided into twenty two *li* units. These differed considerably in size, and were in part originally based on population, with the city of Putian divided into three *li*, and the nearby surrounding villages gathered into several more *li* administrative regions. Some *li* were designed to follow the main lines of the evolving irrigation systems, as most villages were settled along the sides of the main irrigation channels. This led to some *li* becoming elongated in shape, as more land was reclaimed from the sea over time, and irrigation canals were extended into these reclaimed areas. Other *li* units covered quite large areas of sparsely populated hills and mountains, where villages relied on mountain streams for water, and raised fruit trees such as lychees, loquats, and pipa to supplement their incomes.

The *li* sub-cantons were further subdivided into *tu* 圖 local administrative units, and the Putian plain in the early Ming was divided into just over 100 of these regional units. In the late Ming, in response to widespread major scale pirate invasions, a new form of administrative territorial division was instituted, called the *pu* 舖. In many parts of China, this term is used either for wards of a city or for offices of the imperial postal service, but in the Putian plain the term was extended to mean collections of villages with common policing and self-defense duties. These territorial administrative units were preserved to some degree through the Qing dynasty, although major changes were instituted in local taxation and household registration. Although the *li* sub-cantons have now long been abandoned, they are still present in the minds of many villagers, as the different names of the *li* sub-cantons are still used in ritual documents. Thus each individual mentioned in a ritual document provides an address that lists his county, his *li* sub-canton, his village, his ritual territory (*jing* 境), his temple and his altar to the earth god (*shêmiao* 社廟). Villager’s spatial identification combines territorial and administrative spaces from several different eras.

¹⁵ The (*Hongzhi*) *Chongkan Xinghua fuzhi*, j. 21 of 1503 includes full details of the prescribed rites of sacrifice at these altars (2007: 573–582).

In the late Qing (Daoguang period) and Republican period, governments imposed a *baojia* 保甲 mutual security territorial administrative system, and the post-1949 PRC government initiated a long series of changes to territorial administration, introducing units such as agricultural collectives and production brigades (often natural villages), communes, and then after 1979, a system of townships and administrative villages. Changes continued over the past three decades, as cities like Putian were given broader jurisdiction over surrounding regions, and some towns in the Putian plains such as Hanjiang, were promoted to the level of an urban region.

Such changes reflect the fundamental transformation of the economy of Putian plain, which went from being well over two-thirds agricultural in the late 1970s to over two-thirds light industrial by the year 2000. Tremendous economic growth on the order of 20% a year over two decades has transformed the landscape and the villages of the Putian plains. Putian city has tripled in size over the past three decades, leveling most of its lovely wooden buildings from the late Qing and Republican era, and swallowing up several nearby villages. The Hanjiang urban region has doubled in size, adding a large industrial zone filled with factories. A large percentage of these factories produce shoes, including running shoes, for export and for a growing internal market. Many of these factories work on rotating shifts throughout the day, and employ armies of mostly young women from the villages of Putian. Virtually every village on the Putian plain has undergone extensive reconstruction, as wealthy villagers build five and six story homes out of concrete in place of traditional, spacious two story farmhouses, built of wood with walls made of packed earth. The demand for new housing has greatly expanded the size of many villages, leading to a sharp decline in farmland.

Many villages along the coast have been bisected by new high speed highways, or the tracks of new high speed trains. As all land ultimately belongs to the government, and is only leased long-term to the villagers, land can be reclaimed by the government at any time. Compensation is always an issue. Charges of government corruption are common under these circumstances. For displaced villagers in areas absorbed by urban growth or regional infrastructure projects, an entire way of life has come to an end. Interestingly, village temples are often the last building left standing in a village that has been flattened, as protracted negotiations go on as to the costs of compensation and reconstruction, and the site for the rebuilding of the temple. Even

the Communist Party and the local government can not easily ignore these centers of village power, and their connection to the powers of the cosmos. On the eastern side of Putian city in the new suburbs, older village temples have been rebuilt all in a row, surrounded by apartment blocks. To the north of the city, where several villages have been bulldozed to make way for gated communities of expensive apartment buildings, the temples have been relocated to the side of a nearby mountain. However, on the south side of Putian, near the former southern gate, temples still claim a space close to their original locations, and can be found in between new apartment projects.

As will be seen below, the ritual alliances in this survey describe themselves using many different terms. These include the term *cun* 村, designating as we have seen a natural village (that is, an independent settlement surrounded by its own agricultural fields). Another term often found in the survey is *jing* 境, meaning a ritual territory with its own *shê* 社 altar and its own temples. Equally common is the term *shê* 社, meaning a ritual association with its own altar of the tutelary god. The term *xiang* 鄉 is usually equivalent to the term *cun* 村, but often designates smaller, more dispersed villages in rolling hills at the edges of the irrigation system. Finally, the term *jia* 甲 indicates ritual associations often linked to specific neighborhoods, not necessarily with their own independent *shê*-altar. This term can also be used to designate natural villages or lineage sub-divisions as ritual associations.

The locally coined term *qijing* 七境 (seven-fold alliance of ritual territories) is the most common expression used to describe ritual alliances. Such alliances are made up of (usually) seven ritually independent natural villages, each having its own *jing* 境 (sacred ritual territory) containing a *shê* altar and a temple (often both together in one temple). These villages or ritual units celebrate common rituals and processions at a collectively owned and managed main temple. The term *qijing* is synonymous in the Putian plains with ritual alliance, but as will be seen, true seven-village *qijing* are a minority of the ritual alliances found by the survey. Some of the *qijing* we surveyed now include more than seven villages, but usually the additional villages branched off from other villages in the alliance and joined into the alliance without yet achieving independent ritual status. In a few cases, there are less than seven villages in a *qijing*, due to the rapid changes brought on by urbanization, or due to internal disputes within an alliance. The term *jing* can also designate ritual regions within a single

village, or be used to designate alliances with four, ten, or thirteen independent ritual units (in these cases, natural villages). We also find the term *pu* 舖, discussed above, used to describe the city ward ritual alliances inside of Hanjiang 涵江 city, Huangshi 黃石 and Hushi 焉石 towns, and the police/self-defense alliances of some of their surrounding villages.

Of the 153 ritual alliances of the Putian plains, forty-five, or almost one third of the total, fit the criterion of being true *qijing* 七境, made up of seven ritually independent villages. Seventy-four ritual alliances are multiple-unit alliances with more or less than seven component units, as shown in Table 1 below. In this table, one can find the numbers of alliances made up of between two to thirty-six *shê*, *jing*, *jia*, *cun*, *xiang*, or *pu*. Thus there is one multi-village alliance made up of two *jia*, three alliances consisting of three *jia*, and twelve alliances made up of three *cun*, and so on.

Table 1: Table of ritual units within 119 multi-village alliances

| Units | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 18 | 24 | 36 |
|-------|---|----|---|---|---|----|---|---|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| shê | | 5 | 5 | 3 | 3 | | 2 | 1 | | | 2 | 1 | | | |
| jing | | | | 1 | | 45 | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | |
| jia | 1 | 3 | 2 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| cun | | 12 | 5 | 5 | 3 | | | 1 | | | | | 2 | 2 | |
| xiang | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| pu | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |

Thirty-four ritual alliances on the Putian plain are in fact independent villages. These villages have developed internal alliances between different neighborhood or lineage or ritual units within the village (see Table 2 below). The table shows how many of the villages are organized internally through the combination of a certain number of *shê*, *jing*, or *jia* neighborhood or ritual groups.

Table 2: Combinations of ritual units within 34 single village ritual alliances

| Units | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 12 |
|-------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| shê | 10 | 1 | 5 | 6 | | 1 | 8 | |
| Jing | 1 | | 4 | 1 | 2 | | | |
| Jia | 14 | 5 | | | | | 1 | |

In the survey, the ritual alliances are identified in terms of their constituent elements (for example, as a *qijing* seven-fold alliance, or a four village alliance, or a four *shê* alliance within a single natural village.). Many of the multi-village alliances on the Putian plains are referred to locally as *qijing* (sevenfold alliance), even when there are fewer villages or ritual units within the alliance.¹⁶ We can only speculate that this term may have originated in the practice within *weisuo* 衛所 (forts) of building temples in the center of the fortified walled town and at each of the four gates. The central temple in such a fortress town was called the *zhongmiao* 中廟 (central temple) and the others were called the *dongxi nanbei miao* 東西南北廟 (east, west, north, south) temples. Additional temples inside the fort or outside the walls were often called *shang* or *xia miao* 上下廟 (upper and lower temples). Such a constellation of seven temples may have formed a matrix for conceptions of the defensive powers of the ritual alliances.

Upon closer examination, the reader will find that many of the ritual associations underlying these terms have to do with surname groups, lineages, and branches of lineages. A particular lineage or branch of a lineage may live together in a specific neighborhood (*jia*) and use this territorial association as a basis for participation in ritual alliances within a village. If this territorial association has established a *shê* altar the lineage may control the activities of that temple. In many cases, lineages have over time dispersed across a village, or into several nearby villages, and no longer associate on the basis of proximity and residence in a particular village neighborhood. Under these circumstances, the *shê*-temple or the *jia* ritual association may become a multi-surname association. In some cases, particular deities remain the focus of the dispersed lineage's ritual activities. Often particular deities in a multi-deity large village temple are associated with specific lineages or surname groups (including multiple surname groups). These groups take responsibility for the celebration of the god's birthdays, or carry the god's sedan chair in processions. Thus in the survey below the reader will often find that particular lineages take specific gods (or the same god on different days) on a procession around their neighborhoods or to neighborhood shrines or ancestral halls, even if

¹⁶ The first usage of the term *qijing* is found in the *Chongkan Xinghua fuzhi*, originally printed in 1503: juan 9 (p. 274 in the 2007 edition). There it is used to characterize one group of seven villages around Huangshi town, and a second group in the Qingjiang region to the north of Huangshi.

the lineage is now dispersed. In some cases, these activities become the focus of a lineage reunion and rites of ancestral worship, under the watchful eyes of a local god (compare the practices described in the Fuzhou region by Szonyi (2002)).

Even though the surname groups of the Xinghua region were amongst the first in China to experiment with the lineage form and to create new forms of ancestral worship already in the Song, village temples currently far outnumber lineage halls in the villages surveyed.¹⁷ This by no means suggests that lineage relations are unimportant in the area. On the contrary, our historical survey below reveals how crucial lineages were to the reclaiming of land from the sea in the Putian area in the Tang, Song, Yuan and Ming periods. Song sources such as the *Puyang bishi* reveal that many lineages at the time were based within the walls of Putian city, although they usually also had extensive rural land holdings as well. This pattern would continue, with the simultaneous centripetal pull of the district capital and the centrifugal dispersal of each lineage as it expanded into newly reclaimed lands and villages, or divided into separate branches and dispersed across the Putian plain. The growing commercialization of the economy, already highly pronounced in Song Putian, led in the late Ming and Qing dynasty to new structural transformations of the lineage into something closer to a joint stock company, where membership could be purchased. These tendencies furthered the dispersal of lineages and favored the development of multi-surname villages. At the same time, however, many lineage leaders and their families built homes and ancestral halls inside Putian city. Thus when considering the continuing importance of lineage within ritual alliances one should bear in mind that the nature and functions of the lineage changed over time in this area.

Main findings of the survey

The irrigated Putian plain now covers an area of 464 sq. km. along the Xinghua Bay, to the east of Putian city. This plain covers just over ten percent of the Xinghua area as a whole (4060.4 sq. km.). The Xinghua area is made up of the two counties of Putian and Xianyou 仙游, with

¹⁷ See Clark (2007) for a discussion of early lineage formations in the Mulan river valley.

a total population of over 3 million people. These counties are situated between North 24° 59' to 25° 46' and East 118° 27' to 119° 56'. The local dialect is Puxianhua 莆仙話, which is quite distinct (and mutually incomprehensible) from the Fuzhou 福州 or Fuqing 福清 dialect spoken to the immediate north, or the Minnan 閩南 dialect spoken to the immediate west and south. The Xinghua region is ringed by mountains and faces the sea. The Lai 瀨 river runs along a narrow valley through Xianyou county from its multiple sources in the Daiyun 戴雲 mountain range of central Fujian. After crossing into Putian county, the Lai river is diverted into the Mulan 木蘭 irrigation system just below Putian city. From this point it irrigates the southern and the northern Putian plain. The northern plain is also irrigated by the Yanshou 延壽 river and the Qiulu 蓟蘆 river. The Qiulu river also provides water to the separate irrigation system of the Jiuliang 九里洋 area in the northeast corner of the Putian plain.

Nowadays, the Putian alluvial plain to the east of the city is divided into nine townships: Chengjiao 城郊, Xitianwei 西天尾, Wutang 梧塘, Hanjiang 涵江, Jiangkou 江口, Qiulu 蓟蘆, Quqiao 渠橋, Huangshi 黃石, Beigao 北高, and Hushi 筠石, with a population of over 750, 000. Aside from Putian city, with over 110,000 people, the major commercial and population centers are Hanjiang city (population over 70,000), Huangshi town (over 50,000), and Jiangkou town (30,000).¹⁸ The majority of the population still resides in 724 villages scattered across the Putian plain.

On average, we found the population of the 724 villages of the Putian to be over 1000 people (1020), with the population of some villages rising as high as 10000. Of course, there is no such thing as an average village, and what is far more important locally are the relationships (historical, economic, political, and cultural) between larger villages and surrounding smaller ones. From the vantage point of each village, the questions to ask include whether this is a larger, locally dominant village with a long history, with one or more powerful lineages that produced many scholar-literati, or whether it is instead a smaller, dependent village, with mixed surnames, a shorter history,

¹⁸ Estimates drawn from the 2000 national census as reported in the *China 2000 County & District Population Census Data Assemblies* found on <http://chinadataonline.org/member/county2000/>, accessed 4/25/2009.

and few if any scholar-literati in its past. The overall population of the 724 villages surveyed was 746,495.

The survey found over 100 different surname groups in these 724 villages; while the average village had between three and four surnames, some villages had as many as fourteen surnames, and under a third were single surname villages. The survey also found that most villages had three or more temples (3.25), (while some villages had as many as eighteen temples, many of them had only one temple). These thousands of temples (2586) housed many thousands of god statues (10433) representing over 1200 different deities. There were 3966 god statues found in the Nanyang 南洋 southern irrigated plain, 5229 in the Beiyang 北洋 nothern irrigated plain, and 1238 in the Jiuliyang 九里洋 irrigated plain. Village temples thus averaged four gods or more, but some temples house as many as thirty-five gods. The presence of these gods, many of whom were worshipped on their birthdays in communal rituals, meant that there was a considerable amount of ritual activity in the villages throughout the year, in addition to major annual festivals. We were told that villagers in the Jiangkou area could attend rituals and watch operas 250 days out of the year by taking only a short walk to neighboring villages.

We have identified and mapped 153 ritual alliances on the irrigated Putian plain. Mapping these boundaries raises difficult questions about representation, knowledge, and power. There are no physical markers of the boundaries of the ritual alliances. They are instead generated by repeated physical movements of the participants in ritual events—the boundaries are created and continually re-created by the routes taken by processions of the gods as they trace out first the physical limits of their own village, and then move around the boundaries of the ritual alliance to which they belong. Hopefully readers will see the lines drawn on the maps below as lines in motion, vectors of power continually being re-inscribed and always susceptible to change. Through engaging in this survey, we have drawn ourselves into these maps, moving from village to village and re-confirming (and representing) the alliances and their relations to other features of physical space including the irrigation system and the newer roadways that generate new connections and new vectors for the expansion of village space. These ritual alliances were drawn from the ground up, rather than being imposed by the state in the form of an administrative spatial hierarchy. Mapping the ritual alliances enables a comparison of these different kinds of space.

Due to the densely populated nature of the plain, the proximity to the sea and coastal trade, and the presence of a rich transportation network with hundreds of kilometers of irrigation canals along with many roads and bridges, the region is not necessarily a clear illustration of an economic space divided up according to a hierarchy of markets. On the other hand, the town centers of the eight townships into which the plain has been divided administratively since 1980 are fairly evenly distributed, and would have provided daily markets for villagers who could easily reach them (or the city of Putian) within a relatively short time. The current expansion of the transportation system has reduced the layers of the market hierarchy, making daily markets in Putian, Hanjiang, or Huangshi markets readily available on a daily basis. However, market hierarchies do not explain the distribution of the ritual alliances.¹⁹

The overlap between the administrative *li* sub-cantons of Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing times and the economic spatiality of the plains can be better understood when the *li* sub-canton boundaries are seen to have followed segments of the irrigation canals. As these channels, or the lands watered by their secondary or tertiary canals, were extended further into newly reclaimed land from the sea, the sub-cantons stretched out as well to incorporate newly established villages, paddy fields, and their tax revenues. As will be argued further below, the ritual alliances developed for the most part within the boundaries of the sub-cantons, which were also ritual spaces imposed by the early Ming court. The ritual alliances also developed in close connection to physical segments of the irrigation system, whose maintenance required collective collaboration between neighboring villages which can be seen to have formed their own irrigation communities.

Arrangement of entries in the survey

The survey in Volume Two is arranged by ritual alliance and by the villages within each alliance in relation to their location along the major irrigation systems of the Putian plain, rather than in terms of the current Chinese administrative spatial hierarchy. Chinese official administrative space is divided into province, county, city, township, and

¹⁹ See Skinner (1964) for a classic statement of the principals of central place theory and market hierarchies within China.

administrative village levels (the latter is the lowest level of administration in rural areas of China).²⁰ The arrangement of this survey instead follows environmental and geographic features to enable the reader to situate themselves in the evolving landscape of the Putian plain. A brief historical introduction to each ritual alliance will allow the reader to consider the long historical processes of the reclaiming of land from the Xinghua Bay, the establishment of new villages for growing populations, and the environmental aspects of the crucial supply of fresh water within the irrigation system to villages, rice-paddies, vegetable plots and orchards.

The main irrigation systems are the Southern irrigated plain (the Mulan irrigation system), the Northern irrigated plain (made up of the Mulan Weir 木蘭陂, the Yanshou Weir 延壽陂, and the Taiping Weir 太平陂 irrigation systems), and the Nan'an Weir 南安陂 irrigation system of the Jiuliyang area around Jiangkou township on the northeastern edge of the irrigated plain. Most of these ancient weirs are still intact, although they have been repeatedly repaired, and continue to serve as low bridges over rivers. The segments of the irrigation system were divided up by the boundaries of the *li* sub-cantons of the Song, Ming and Qing period, which are no longer part of contemporary administrative space, but which retain importance in terms of the ritual spaces of the irrigated plains. Generally speaking, the *li* sub-canton boundaries closely follow the path of the main canals and secondary channels of the irrigation systems. Moreover, the ritual alliances also take shape along subsections of the irrigation system, as can be seen by careful examination of the maps of each ritual alliance in the *Survey*.

The 153 ritual alliances presented in turn in the survey are composed of 724 natural villages. Each ritual alliance is first located in relation to the main canal(s) or secondary channel(s) of the irrigation system that provides its water. Next, information on the late Ming and Qing *pu* (police/self defense unit) to which the villages of the ritual alliance belonged is provided. The boundaries of these *pu* units tend to be smaller than, and occasionally cross over, the ritual alliance boundaries. These units have also left their trace on the ritual organization of

²⁰ According to Yu Zhan, Vice Director of the Chinese Association for Promoting Township and Village Development, there are 680,000 Administrative Villages in China with some 900 million farmers living in them. *Peoples Daily*, May 30, 2005.

certain areas, especially in the area around Hushi township at the far southern end of the irrigated plain.

The general date of the settlement of the villages of the alliance is then recounted, whether Song, Ming, mid-Qing, or late Qing-Republican, based on lists of villages from successive local district and irrigation system gazetteers. Some villages will have disappeared or changed name over time, but the general trend is for older villages to reach a maximum size after which nearby settlements are established and new villages divide off. As additional land was reclaimed from the Xinghua bay nearby, this provided more possibilities for the establishment of new settlements, often within view of the founding settlements. Generally speaking, it is possible, when standing in any village in the Putian plain, to see three or four villages distributed around that village. The villages are on average less than half a kilometer apart. By consulting the maps of the ritual alliances accompanying the village data, the reader will be able to visualize the historical evolution of each ritual alliance.

Information on prominent lineages within the ritual alliances is next provided. These are lineages which produced successful examination candidates, including both *jinshi* 進士 (metropolitan scholars), and *juren* 舉人 (provincial scholars). Memorial archways erected in honor of particular lineages are detailed. This information will enable readers to sense the depth and distribution of elite scholar-literati across the irrigated plain. The main temples and deities of each ritual alliance are then detailed. Any historical inscriptions dating from before 1949 and relating to these temples are listed.²¹ Finally, the banner alliance of the late Qing to which the village belonged is provided. This information, although inevitably only fragmentary, should enable readers to begin to visualize the various elements that combined to make a particular village unique in terms of its powerful families (or absence of such), major temples, and its interactions with neighboring villages and more broadly with the entire irrigation system and local culture over time. We invite readers to enter into the local landscape, and to consider the entire irrigated plain from a great variety of different points of

²¹ These inscriptions are gathered in Kenneth Dean and Zheng Zhenman, *Epigraphical Materials on the History of Religion in Fujian: the Xinghua Region*, Fuzhou: Fujian People's Publishing House, 1995. A subsequent publication will provide the texts of post-1949 stone inscriptions, which have been continuously carved and mounted in temples across the Putian plain over the past thirty years.

view, and to think from the perspective of each of the villages of the plain, reflecting on their changing perspectives as they reclaimed land, expanded into new settlements, built temples and ritual alliances, and developed or declined over time.

At this point, each natural village in the alliance is given a separate entry. A natural village is defined by its physical boundaries (fields surrounding a continuous settlement). The entries begin with a description of each village settlement which first identifies the Administrative Village bureaucratic unit to which each natural village belongs (note that several natural villages are often jointly managed by one Administrative Village but some very large natural villages have been divided into several Administrative Villages. The average population size managed by a single Administrative Village committee is around 2000 people). The population of the village is then given, along with notes on the local temple ritual system and its main principles of organization (by neighborhood or by surname group). A second section lists the principal surname groups of the village, with some information on lineage branches and ancestral halls, and on local points of origin of different lineages. The third section lists the temples of the village along with their main gods and their secondary gods placed on side altars or inside halls of the temple. The fourth section outlines villages rituals. These are divided into the rituals of the *Yuanxiao* 元宵 (first full moon) festival (sometimes including the *toufu* 頭福 (first days of good fortune) celebrations in the early 2nd lunar month), and the birthday celebrations of the feast days of the gods worshipped in the village temples. A fifth section is included on ritual groups for villages where this information was available.

The survey process

The survey on which these findings are based was begun in the summer of 1993 with the assistance of a team of high school teachers from the No. 6 Middle School in Hanjiang, Putian. Twelve teachers spent that summer visiting two or three villages a day in nine different townships (Jiangkou, Hanjiang, Wutang, Xitianwei, Chengjiao, Quqiao, Huangshi, Huating 華亭, Nanri 南日 and Pinghai 平海).²² They gathered

²² A subsequent survey was conducted in the summer of 1995 by teachers at the Meizhou Technical College in Fengting covers an additional 450 villages in seven

information on several hundred villages. These findings were typed up and cross checked through repeated visits by the authors between 1994 and 2006. As we traveled through the irrigated plain, we found that the irrigation system often stretched past township boundaries. We thus extended our survey to the north into Qiulu 萩蘆 township, to the south into Hushi and Lingchuan 靈川 townships, and in the southeast to Beigao 北高 township. As we refined our survey and revisited sites, we were able to break down administrative village clusters into natural villages. Our ultimate objective was to identify independent ritual units. This was complicated by the fact that most villages divide up the organization of ritual activities by neighborhoods.

Maps of the Putian area were gathered from several sources. These included PLA (Peoples Liberation Army) military maps from the 1960s with a 1:50,000 scale, as well as the non geo-referenced maps and lists in the *Putian diminglu* (*List of toponyms of Putian*, Putian: 1980), along with city maps of Putian and Xianyou from the 1980's at a higher level of resolution. Village locations were first identified on the basis of the PLA maps, which served as our underlying base maps for the project. All these maps were digitized, and combined, and then linked to satellite images of the region. Village locations were confirmed on the basis of comparing the maps, the satellite images, and our field observations. Over several summers, Prof. Zheng and I revisited each village twice, and in some cases three or four times, to verify and add to the data. During these visits, we built up a large collection of over 20,000 digital images of temple, god statues, murals, and posted temple accounts. We have published the pre-1949 stone inscriptions separately, and include references to their locations in the survey (Dean and Zheng, 1995).

The data from the surveys, including the images, has been entered into a series of databases and linked to a digital map of the region using a GIS (geographical information system).²³ This GIS system

townships of Xianyou (Fengting, Jiaowei, Gaiwei, Bangtou, Chengdong, and Duwei), as well as the island of Nanridao and Pinghai in Putian county. Several of the Xianyou townships are situated along the upper reaches of the Lai River (also known as the Mulan river). These materials will require extensive cross-checking before they can be verified and used to compare with data from the Putian plains.

²³ The PLA maps were digitized into raster files, and subsequently vectorized to allow for various kinds of geographical analysis. They served as the base maps for our digital maps. We then superimposed satellite images over this digital map. The satellite images include LANDSAT images from 1974, 1984, 1994, 2002 (LANDSAT 7),

allows us to link data and images to points on the map representing the locations of the 724 villages in the Putian plain. This system can display in map form any of the features listed in the database for each and all villages. We have also developed historical GIS maps to chart the historical evolution of the irrigated plain, the evolution of the irrigation system over time, the distribution of the lineages (surname groups), the cults of the local gods, the 153 ritual alliances that the villages have formed from the Ming onwards, and the historical distribution of scholar literati over the Song and Ming, amongst other features (see below).

Methodological implications

This survey innovates by attempting to avoid the limitations of the single village study by examining all the villages in a given geographically defined region. Of course, this study lacks the depth of the single village study, but hopefully makes up for this deficiency to some degree by unearthing a wider range of forms of village organization as seen through their annual rituals. Examining the entire range of villages enables us to explore the full set of discernible interrelationships between territorial and lineage based social and ritual units. Surveying all of the village temples in the area enables us to determine the composition and parameters of the local pantheon, and to begin to analyze the historic layers of this pantheon. Indeed, the survey volume could be seen as a tool for such kinds of analysis.²⁴

Patterns that emerge from the GIS mapping of survey data can be used to test historical hypotheses. As the historical introduction below

as well as satellite images taken in 2005 with more precise resolution by ICONOS and QUICKBIRD. Using digital elevation data from the USGS, we created a 3D image of the Putian bay over which the LANDSAT satellite image was draped, allowing the viewer to get a better sense of the lay of the land. As information became more complex, and greater querying capacities were needed to discover the correlations between different kinds of information, it became necessary to switch from a system connecting EXCEL files to MAPINFO software to a system connecting an ACCESS database to ARCGIS 9 mapping software. Subsequently, In order to include large quantities of images (which do not work well within ACCESS databases), and to put the data onto a website and eventually make it available without copyright protected software to interested users, we developed a MYSQL database linked with Mapserver software.

²⁴ See the discussion of the different layers of the cult of the earth god below.

will demonstrate, we mix historical sources with survey data to generate hypotheses about the multiple origins of the ritual alliances now covering the Putian plain. We examine cases of the mutation of early Ming *shê* altars into regional ritual alliances in the mid-Ming, and also examine other alliances that formed later, or which appear to have formed on the basis of their proximity along a stretch of the irrigation system.

Another example of the uses of GIS mapping concerns our discovery of quite discrete local sub-cultures within the irrigated plain. For example, many villages in the northeastern Jiuliyang plain, especially in Jiangkou (but also beyond the Jiuliyang plain in parts of Wutang, Xitianwei and Hanjiang) carry on a local tradition of the collective training of spirit mediums. These mediums and their altar associates (called *tanban* 壇班) perform group exorcistic line dances in this area. South of Jiangkou, along the coast of the Xinghua Bay past Hanjiang, many villages maintain a tradition of spirit medium contests known locally as *caihua* 插花 (lit. “plucking flowers”), that is, standing bare-chested in the shooting sparks of a massive Roman candle to show the power of the god. Both these traditions are absent in the southern irrigated plain, where mediums are mostly “self-selected”, and engage most commonly in spirit writing and individual trance. When we viewed the distribution of the more extravagant forms of spirit possession sites in relation to the distribution of sites of villages which had produced scholar literati who had passed higher levels of the imperial examinations, becoming *jinshi* and *ju ren* in the Song and the Ming, we noticed that the latter were primarily clustered in the southern irrigated plain, and in scattered locations in the western edge and older parts of the northern plain, whereas the *tanban* altar associations and *caihua* medium networks were mostly clustered in the areas lacking literati. Thus one can hypothesize that the higher concentration of scholar-literati in the southern plain worked against the elaboration of distinctive local traditions of spirit medium performance found in the northeast corner of the plain.

Using GIS mapping, one can unearth many suggestive correlations in distributions of different cultural features across the plain. For example, certain gods such as *Qitian dasheng* 齊天大聖 (*Sun Wukong* 孫悟空) and *Puji shenghou* 普濟聖侯 (*Zhu Bajie* 豬八戒), the Monkey and the Pig of the classic novel *Xiyouji* 西游記 (*Journey to the West*), appear more often in poorer villages in the northern plain, often in higher elevations than in the low-lying, densely irrigated, wealthier villages of the southern plains. This suggests that the unruly natures of these gods

appealed to poorer communities rather than to villages with established scholar-literati lineages (Shahar and Weller 1996).

Another example of the power and possibility of the GIS approach is the way it allows us to examine the impact of the early Qing coastal evacuations on the villages within ten kilometers of the sea (see *Map 27: The Qing Coastal Evacuation*, below). The ban was designed to contain pirate activity and prevent any local collaboration. Most of these villages were abandoned and then re-claimed and re-populated after the ban was lifted some twenty years later. Villages “beyond the limit (*jiewai* 界外)” tend to have many more surname groups and many more temples, including temples of so called “secret religions”, as compared with the relatively undisturbed *jienei* 界內 (within the borders) villages. The *jiewai* village tend to have multiple village temples and even several Three in One temples (and multiple varieties of lay Buddhist temples) within a single village, indicating that these temples provided networking opportunities for communities whose established lineages had been disrupted. This is only one aspect of the spread of the Three in One movements across Putian and Xianyou that can be explored using GIS tools. It must be said, however, that the amount of data provided by a GIS linked survey of this nature does not make it easy to draw generalizations. Nonetheless, by comparing different distributions of features (gods, surnames, dates of celebrations, population density, proximity to towns and cities) and historical layers (changing ecological features, administrative regions, and local alliances), one can examine unexpected correlations and generate endless new questions about the region one is studying.

A cultural geographic approach to a region, especially a coastal region like the irrigated Putian plain, also requires one to be open to broader trans-national flows of ideas, peoples, products, images, and technologies from Southeast Asia and the West. Thus we are attentive to the impact of Overseas Chinese and Christian communities on the ritual networks of Putian. A local perspective also enables one to examine the history of imperial institutional reforms from the point of view of local appropriations, transformations and mutations of these institutions into emerging networks of local society.²⁵ A survey of all the village temples in the irrigated plain led to the discovery of many new local historical documents, and makes it interesting to

²⁵ See the discussion of new approaches to the cultural geography of China in Carolyn Cartier, “Origins and Evolution of a Geographical Idea: The Macroregion in China”, *Modern China* 28.1 (2002): 79–142.

read these documents in terms of their locational significance. Visiting the temples of these villages and meeting many excited, courteous, proud, knowledgeable, sincere and dedicated worshippers led us to consider the history of local ritual from the perspective of the villagers, rather than the elites. Examining the intricate and beautiful temples they have built, one is deeply impressed by the degree of refinement within village culture and its many modes of expression (learned and eloquent poetic couplets, captivating murals, intricate carvings, elusive divinatory poetry, imposing architecture, carefully cultivated plants and flowers, cultured temple keepers, devout patrons). Participating in many boisterous, complex, occasionally solemn but usually highly ludic ritual events of these village temples leads one to reflect on these events as the expression of a highly literate, deeply cultured society that is extraordinarily self-aware, good-humored, and creative.

CHAPTER TWO

DEFINITIONS OF RELIGION IN CHINA¹

Some of the early pioneers of Chinese ethnography and anthropology produced subtle and nuanced ethnographic accounts of Han Chinese communities in the 1930's and 1940's which covered ritual aspects of communal life. After 1949, Soviet style models of ethnographic minority studies were imposed and carried out under the auspices of the National Minorities Institute and its linked system of training colleges for minority cadres. In this mode of ethnography, "religion" is defined in a functionalist fashion as a fundamental, if reactionary, aspect of minority culture. This mode of analysis was not however applied to Han Chinese society, which was judged to have been largely secularized by the Chinese revolution and by the revolutionary processes of modernization underway since before the beginning of the 20th century. Chinese ethnography of "national minorities" in the 1950's and early 1960's was mostly engaged in researching, and to a certain extent "fixing" the religious beliefs and ritual practices of a number of "minority peoples". At the same time, one of the world's largest social surveys was underway across China as part of the land reform movement, which assigned each family to a class rank while also assessing the holdings of lineage trusts, monasteries and temples across the country. This incredible archive has yet to be fully accessed, but it promises to eventually provide extensive insights into many aspects of Chinese society and culture in the 20th century.

For several decades after 1949, anthropologists conducted research on Chinese culture in Taiwan, Hong Kong and Southeast Asia. In 1974, Freedman proclaimed the unity of Chinese religion "as a system". Freedman based his claims in part on the earlier ethnographic

¹ Anthony Yu points out (2005:2-25) that the Chinese term "zongjiao" 宗教 (lit. ancestral teachings) which is usually translated as "religion", was introduced in the sixth century A.D. in reference to the foreign teachings of Buddhism. The term was later adapted in the nineteenth century by scholars in Meiji Japan to translate another foreign conception, that is, the Western notion of "religion". This re-defined phrase was soon taken up, along with a host of newly coined modern neologisms, or re-defined expressions, by late imperial and Republican period Chinese writers.

work of J.J. DeGroot in Batavia and in Xiamen, as shown in *The Religious System of China* (1892–1910) as well as the theoretical writings of Marcel Granet in Paris, as exemplified by *The Religion of the Chinese People* (1922).

DeGroot and Granet have pointed the way to an understanding of how in modern times the vast hierarchised society of China might be seen to display a single underlying religion taking many guises. (Freedman, 1974: 34).

The concept of a system of Chinese religion developed by these anthropologists was a structural-functional one. There was great emphasis placed on the timeless sphere of religion/culture within Chinese society—this notion of the inseparability or near equivalence of religion with culture was furthered by notions of religion as a cultural system developed by Geertz (1973). We will return below to the problematic nature of this early anthropological discovery of “the unity of Chinese religion”. The close connection between these static and unified concepts of religion and/as culture in anthropology with colonialist and Orientalist modes of knowledge production was pointed out by a number of critical anthropologists, including Fabian (2002) and Asad (1993). This mode of post-colonial critique, along with objective changes in the conditions of anthropological research, led to a critical reflexive crisis of representation within anthropology as a whole (Clifford and Markus 1986).

The influence of these critical movements within anthropology took a rather long time to impact China anthropology. One important response was the articulation of calls for an indigenous “native anthropology”, which sought the development of theoretical paradigms from within Chinese experience, rather than merely applying anthropological concepts elaborated in Africa and elsewhere to the Chinese case, or generalizing findings from one place (Taiwan) to all of China (Chen 1987; Murray and Hong, 2005).

Feuchtwang (2001) had long argued for the double (official vs. popular), if not multiple and potential contradictory dimensions of Chinese ritual practice (local gods as simultaneously protective and demonic). He argued for local decenterings of power within discrete traditions of “contested authority claims” and “historical references”. This perspective still had difficulty disentangling itself from a model of an internally contested but still unified cultural system (Bell 1989). Feuchtwang and Wang Mingming have gone on to conduct a

series of comparative studies of local politics and place-making (what Feuchtwang refers to as the establishment of “minor sovereignties”) in Taiwanese and in Chinese communities (Feuchtwang and Wang 2001; Feuchtwang 2004). Wang Mingming’s (1995) own work on popular uses of space within Quanzhou raised the question of local forms of cultural resistance to hegemonic projects of national unity.

Weller’s work (1987) initially worked within a framework of cultural unity while attempting to bring out the disunities and well as the unities of Chinese religion and culture. His later work on alternate civilities (Weller 1999) rejects the imposition of Western models of modernization or civil society and imagines a different trajectory for local communal ritual traditions and emergent modernist religious movements in new forms of construction of the social and the national unique to Chinese societies. In general, his work can be read to move beyond a notion of the systemic unity of Chinese religion or culture, and implies a fragmented, multidimensional China, or the coexistence of multiple Chinese cultures.

Chun (2000) attacked the root of Freedman’s notion of the unity of Chinese culture and religion through his deconstruction of the sacred cow of the lineage form in his study of Chinese village property relations in Hong Kong. He also makes the important point that membership in the *jia* 家 (family) is a ritual role first, and a biological kinship role only secondarily.²

Anthropology in China itself has focused primarily on questions of urbanization and the modernization of the peasant way of life. These aspects of developmental anthropology were provoked by the incredible speed of hyper-development in China, which coincided with the re-establishment of anthropology as an academic discipline in China in the early 1980’s. Some Chinese anthropologists worked to translate, introduce and apply a broader range of socio-cultural anthropological approaches in the 1990’s. Still, the bulk of the work in China had an understandable focus on the applied anthropology of development. There is a striking absence of cultural anthropological research on local communal ritual traditions of the Han Chinese.

² In addition, Chun’s (2001) examination of the limits of the concept of diaspora in the Southeast Asian context raises critical perspectives on emerging claims to an alternative modernity within neo-Confucian (and neo-liberal) Overseas Chinese business networks—a subject to which we will return below.

Within the newly cross-fertilizing fields of socio-cultural history and anthropology a number of new perspectives emerged on local ritual practices in China. Duara (1988) introduced the concept of a cultural nexus of power of traditional Chinese society in the Shandong area. Duara noted many of the elements of the cultural nexus of power in the area he studied (lineages, temples, irrigation maintenance groups, crop-watching associations), but he did not trace the historical evolution of these elements. Instead, he implied that this cultural nexus was doomed to unravel under the pressure of the modern nation state. Another group of scholars who sought to combine anthropological approaches with historical research were David Faure and Helen Siu, who worked in Hong Kong, the New Territories, and the Pearl River delta of Guangdong (Faure and Siu, 1995; Siu 1989; Faure 1986; 2007). In Guangdong, they were joined in their research by Liu Zhiwei 劉志偉 (Liu 1995; 1997), a student of Liang Fangzhong 梁方仲 of Zhongshan University, and Chen Chunsheng 陳春聲 (Zheng and Chen 2003). In Xiamen, the students of Fu Yiling 傅衣凌 of Xiamen University, including Zheng Zhenman 鄭振滿, continued Fu's emphasis on the collection and study of local historical materials, and broadened their investigations to include local ritual traditions in addition to socio-economic questions (Zheng, 2001).

This kind of local or regional history has had to defend itself against claims of irrelevance or of its inability to speak to larger themes of national history. Such demands for national, homogenous historical narrative were directly challenged in Duara's *Rescuing History from the Nation* (Duara, 1995). Clearly, powerful nationalistic and institutional forces continue to demand the unification of historical narratives, but these new schools of local history, with their methodological links between history and anthropology, have worked productively with a new focus on the lives of common people based on local historical documents gathered during fieldwork in local communities. The Huanan school of local history is engaged in several internal debates, with Faure and Liu (Ke and Liu 2000; Faure 2007) recently proposing models of cultural integration and identification with the state, while the authors (Zheng Zhenman (2001; 2003) and Kenneth Dean (1998)) emphasize instead processes of local cultural mediation, experimentation, and hybridization, the spread of elite ritual techniques into different local communities, and the local appropriations of those techniques and symbols for very different, local purposes. Perhaps because

of these debates, a significant challenge to nationalist historiography has emerged in these studies.

Zheng's work on the *Family-Lineage Organization and Social Change in Ming and Qing Fujian* (2001) also demonstrated that the Chinese lineage was a highly malleable form, which could go so far as to transform into a trans-national joint-stock corporation in which unrelated individuals could buy shares. This model explodes the earlier A-Z continuum of lineage forms proposed as modifications of the Freedman model of the Chinese lineage (Freedman 1964). We will see below one example of this kind of "super-lineage" linking Putian with Southeast Asia.

If anthropology has had a fairly hard time establishing itself as an academic discipline in China, the same is also true of religious studies (Yang 2004). Within the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, religious studies ranks very high, just below Marxist Leninist thought. But this was originally because of the importance of analyzing ideological formations that were by definition alienated and potentially reactionary. In order to merge theory with practice, the implementation of policy emerging from this critical analysis of religion was the purview of the Bureau of Religious Affairs. There are still relatively few programs in religious studies in China. The earliest ones (Sichuan, Renda and Nanjing) were established in the 1980s. In the past fifteen years there has been an exponential growth of this academic field, involving the translation of many overviews and monographs of Western religious studies, but there are still very few empirical studies of contemporary Chinese ritual traditions.

Within Western religious studies, a recent movement has carried out a critical reflection on the ideology of religious studies, and interrogated the processes of the invention of "world religions" and the study of comparative religions (McCutcheon 1997; Dubuisson 2003, Fitzgerald 2000, Masuzawa 2005). This critical movement questions the universalization of the notion of religiosity, which they traced back to Western theology. Some of these critics suggest instead a more self-conscious sociology of religion, based on paradigmatic changes to the field introduced by Stark and others who talk in terms of a pragmatics of religion as a set of rational choices within differing ritual marketplaces (Stark and Finke, 2000). An extended sociology of comparative religion may not however completely escape the critique of the founding notions of the field as a whole. Within anthropology, Asad

(1993) also called for the rejection of the term “religion” in place of the study of specific ritual traditions and disciplinary practices. In his subsequent work he has also urged the exploration of the impact of modernization theory, notions of secularization, and the institutionalization of Western definitions of religion on non Western societies (Asad 2003).

Western studies of Chinese religion have also foundered over questions of defining the field of study. While Buddhist studies has a place in many departments of religion in North America and Europe, Daoist studies positions are extremely rare. Most religious studies programs are prepared to introduce religious dimensions of Confucianism, but many universities delegate Confucian studies to philosophy or East Asian Studies. But all the more evident for its entire absence within departments of religion is the realm of Chinese popular religion, or if one prefers the term, local communal religion. Following Asad, we may wish to call these practices local ritual traditions—the ensemble of which in any particular region would be an object of study. If Chinese religion is a unity, as claimed by Freedman, it has yet to become an object of systematic research. If it is instead a vast array of different ritual traditions, some of considerable longevity and complexity, all intertwining in different ways in different places, it is perhaps understandable why few universities have dared to approach the study of such a complex range of phenomena. Neglecting to do so unfortunately means that a vast realm of human experience goes unstudied.

Within China, the institutionalization of a particular definition of religion drawn from Marxism over the past fifty years has led to many unintended consequences. This definition insists that each religion must have a distinct religious organization, a religious leadership, religious doctrines and beliefs, and religious practices reflecting these doctrines. In 1982, Document 19, “The Basic Viewpoint and Policy on the Religious Question during Our County’s Socialist Period.” mandated: “respect for and promotion of the freedom of religious belief.” This reaffirmed earlier laws protecting freedom of religious belief issued in 1949 and in the first Chinese constitution of 1954. As was the case with these earlier laws, Document 19 limited the freedom to believe to five major religions, Buddhism, Daoism, Islam, Catholicism and Protestantism. Article 36 of Document 19 limited state protection to “normal” religious activities, without further definition of this term. In 1991, Document 6, “Circular on Some Problems Concerning the Further Improvement of Work on Religion,” mandated that every

religious organization had to register with the authorities. Any unregistered group would by definition be illegal. New regulations were included on the internal organization of these groups covering issues such as personnel and financial accounting. In 1994, new regulations were issued by State Council on procedures for registration. In 1999 the State reasserted its power to distinguish orthodox from heterodox beliefs, and to classify heterodox religious groups such as the Falungong as illegal cults. Then on March 1, 2005, the State Council issued a new set of "Regulations on Religious Affairs", which is primarily devoted to bureaucratic issues of registration, internal organization of religious groups, and official supervision by state agencies. The Regulations no longer include any mention of religious belief, but they maintain the ambiguous language about "normal religious activity".

One earlier, but representative, formulation of the limits of normal religious activity was provided in a nationally circulated note from the Zhejiang Provincial CCP Committee's Party Rectification Office in 1986:

In his speech at the National Conference of Party Delegates, Comrade Deng Xiaoping seriously pointed out: "In recent years production has gone up, but the pernicious influence of capitalism and feudalism has not been reduced to a minimum. Instead, some evil things that had long been extinct after liberation have come to life again." This issue warrants our close attention. Some time ago, due to laxities in ideological and political work, feudal superstitions and patriarchal activities gained ground in some localities in our province, particularly in some rural areas, seriously poisoning the minds of the masses, particularly the younger generation, and affecting the building of socialist spiritual civilization. Some Party members and cadres also joined in the activities. Effective measures should be taken in line with Party rectification in order to resolutely curb and rectify this unhealthy trend. It should be made clear that the "normal religious activities" protected under the Chinese Constitution refer to religious ceremonies of Buddhism, Taoism, Islam, Catholicism, and Christianity performed in religious places in accordance with their respective traditions and customs of religious activities conducted by religious followers in their own homes. These include prostrating oneself before the image of the Buddha, reciting scriptures, burning joss sticks, going to church, saying prayers, expounding Buddhist sutras, giving sermons, hearing Mass, receiving baptisms, being initiated into monkhood or nunhood, fasting, celebrating religious festivals, performing last rites, and conducting funeral services. Indiscriminate construction of temples without the approval of the Department concerned and feudal superstitious activities exceeding the limits prescribed by the religious policy must be stopped. Building clan temples, drawing genealogical charts,

joining persons of different ancestors to make them bear the same family name, and performing rites in honor of the ancestors are feudal, patriarchal activities, impermissible under our Socialist System. Invoking immortals to exorcise evil spirits, praying for rain, divining by the eight trigrams, telling fortunes by analyzing the component parts of Chinese characters, and practicing physiognomy and geomancy are feudal superstitious activities which should be resolutely banned. All activities which seriously infringe on the interests of the State and jeopardize the lives and property of the people must be resolutely suppressed (March 1, 1986, *Guangming ribao*).

Fortunately, official attitudes towards local religion in southeast China have become more open, and there have been interesting recent efforts to reach new understandings of local religious movements there. However, in many parts of central China, local religion is still poorly understood even by officials in charge of its supervision.

These kinds of definitions of religion, as they have been adapted in official policy in China, do not closely correspond with the range of ritual practices found in local communities across China. Instead, they cleave contemporary practice into pieces, with some aspects considered acceptable and others not (for example, spirit possession and ancestor worship). This is especially clear when state officials attempt to apply such a definition and its associated policies and institutions to the field of popular local ritual traditions. There one finds no clearly distinct religious organization, religious leader, religious doctrine, or “religious” practices—in the sense of practices reflecting specifically articulated doctrinal beliefs. The ubiquity of spirit possession in this realm of ritual activity suggests an openness to revelation and alterity quite distinct from the “religions of the book”. The importance of lineage, whether within the context of ancestral worship or as a key element underlying multiple modes of local organization of popular god worship, indicates the continuity of the fundamental ritual role of the *jia* (family) in everyday life.

One way that this problem has been dealt with in the past fifteen years in China is for scholars and some government officials to categorize popular ritual practices as “folk customs”, thereby making them more acceptable but also making them recuperable for projects of nationalism under the broader umbrella of Chinese culture. Here too there is a long legacy of nationalist plans for the improvement of culture, the quality of the people, and in the extreme, but still common version, the transmission of modernist culture to people who are said to have no culture. One extraordinary result of the spread of these

discourses is that one often hears villagers engaged in complex ritual activities state that they have no culture (沒有文化), and that they are practicing feudal superstition (封建迷信), and isn't their feudal superstitious activity magnificent? Clearly, the terms of the prevailing discourse are undergoing intense strain.

One aspect of these definitional or conceptual problems must be discussed here, as it sets the stage for the survey below. Within Chinese academic and policy circles, the study of "Chinese popular religion" has traditionally meant the study of religious led peasant rebellion—that is to say millenarian cults and secret societies, as seen in the monumental study by Ma Xisha and Hang Bingfang entitled *Zhongguo minjian zongjiaoshi* (*A History of Chinese Popular Religion*) (1992). In effect, the field of Chinese popular religion has been constituted as the study of heterodoxy and superstition (*mixin* 迷信)—that is to say actions defined as illegal and heretical. Scholars such as Overmyer (1976; 1999), Seiwert (2003), and ter Haar (1992) have labored to document the limitations of this scholarly perspective by demonstrating: 1) that the vast majority of popular religious movements across Chinese history have been peaceable and not involved in rebellion, and 2) that those that did rebel more often than not were driven to do so by the actions of the state. Ter Haar (1992) has been particularly clear in documenting the impact of pejorative labels and unexamined presuppositions in this historical process. Well known developments in the late 1990's have however only exacerbated this trend of Chinese scholarship, as can be seen by the proliferation of publications on historical secret societies and a new literature on comparative approaches to cults (in the current negative sense of the term). Of course, many Chinese scholars have attempted in response to develop a more comprehensive and inclusive, not to say harmonious, approach to religious studies.

In some ways, these trends are a continuation of the dismissive attitudes of earlier Chinese elites towards local ritual traditions. In this, the Confucian elite was to some extent aided by higher level Buddhist monks and Daoist masters who sought court patronage or the support of landed gentry and local officials. At court, these groups often maintained a distance from local ritual traditions.³ But even

³ The exception being those ritual specialists who were brought to court specifically due to their links to local ritual traditions. This was especially the case with Daoist ritual masters.

Confucian literati had to maintain a relationship with their own village temples, and mid and lower level Buddhist monks and Daoist masters were deeply involved in local ritual traditions. Most likely, it was the close connection between Celestial Master Daoism and local communities across China (especially in the south) that led the Qing court to become suspicious and to decrease and eventually deny court patronage to this branch of Daoism. But local communities continued to sponsor Daoist rites, providing the economic support necessary for the preservation and expansion of the many local ritual forms of Daoism, which evolved independently in relation to local communal ritual traditions. Under PRC models of the state and the citizenry, the new theory and practice of religion led to far more invasive and systematic forms of control than the sporadic attacks of the late imperial state. These were different kinds of state paranoia. For the imperium, the project was to extend imperial cosmological power through ritual means and through education and emulation (*jiaohua* 教化) to each community and family, but in fact the ritual agents of the emperor encountered a remarkably diverse field of local cosmological powers and ritual specialists, challenging their efforts to impose a continuous model of cosmological power. The totalizing and individualizing demands of the modern-state form created different demands for an enlightenment style, dialectical struggle between the forces of rationality and progress and the mysteriously resistant powers of what state agents could only conceive of as “feudal superstition”. Thus the seeming continuities in approach to popular ritual practices of the imperial state and that of the Nationalist and PRC governments belies a serious and significant change in definitions and tactics related to the rise of a modern nation-state with new bio-political powers.

In early 20th century Western scholarship, Daoism was treated as the degeneration of an ancient and noble philosophic movement, or at best as a form of personal magic with little connection to communal life (Weber, 1968). Only after the “discovery” of the ongoing Daoist ritual tradition in Taiwan by Schipper (1974) and Saso (1978, see also Strickmann 1980) in the 1960s was there a gradual rethinking of the complex interconnections of Daoism with local ritual traditions. As research into different Daoist ritual traditions across China has slowly proceeded over the past twenty-five years, a somewhat clearer picture of the multiplicity of liturgical frameworks within distinct mixes of localized Daoist ritual traditions interacting with evolving local ritual traditions with different local pantheons has emerged. These local tra-

ditions, and their appropriations of the elite ritual traditions of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism, defy easy generalization into a unified system of Chinese religion. They demonstrate an exuberant multiplicity. Underlying this multiplicity are manifold forms of complex local organization.

In terms of sheer numbers, this is a massive phenomenon, and it always has been one, even if ignored by both traditional and modern scholarship. Of course, one's perceptions of China are much affected by what one sees. The hyper-development of Chinese economy is visible in every city and town and many villages across the country. Nonetheless, the gap between rich and poor continues to grow at an alarming pace. The experiential gap between urban and rural everyday life expands equally quickly, despite the spread of modern telecommunications. In many rural areas the revival of ritual practices appears to be taking hold, especially in those areas close enough to expanding urban centers but far enough away or sophisticated enough (due to historical reasons) to preserve some local cultural autonomy. Due to the nature of the issue, there will never be an objective count of the people involved in these local practices, although the number is sure to be in the hundreds of millions.

Inside Chinese academic and religious policy circles, there has been a clear recognition of the advance of secularization of the urban population along with a greater openness towards the activities of the official religions. The local offices of the Bureau of Religious Affairs now include minority and ethnic affairs under their purview, which would seem to indicate some pragmatic acknowledgement of the broader cultural dimensions of local ritual practice amongst Han Chinese as well as among the "national minorities". Unfortunately, or perhaps predictably, this has led to a bureaucratic bean-counting approach, where local temples are now often officially registered as "Daoist" in order to fall under some acceptable official classification.⁴ This allows for closer supervision and regulation of financial and other aspects of local ritual organization. This is a process that repeats in some respects the developments on Taiwan over the past fifty years in official policy towards "popular religion". Some interesting local flexibility in the

⁴ Note that in Singapore and Indonesia, Daoism was not recognized as an official religion, which led the majority of the Chinese populations of those states to define themselves as Buddhists.

application of these categories and concepts has been demonstrated by the designation of temples of the Three in One movement in the Xinghua area as “sites of local religious activity”. The concept of a “local religion” moves beyond the limits of the policy of the five official religions and shows greater awareness of the complex lived experience on the ground. This breakthrough is a mutual accomplishment as the Three in One movement has petitioned for this kind of official recognition for decades.

One way to explore these issues is to start from the ground up, by examining contemporary ritual life and organization. We suggest an alternative approach to local ritual traditions as the intensification of everyday life, rather than the establishment of a separate, sacred space or a private domain of individualized worship. Arguing that ritual is an intensification of the everyday is not simply to emphasize the highly ritual foundations of everyday social interaction, but also to point to the space of play, pleasure, and friendship (Lefebvre 1991) within the everyday that are intensified in ritual events. Of course, Lefebvre has been concerned to document the overcoding of these spaces by capitalist relations. What is especially intriguing about the contemporary ritual events in Fujian is their ability to fold in the forces of capitalism and the forces of nationalism, to speed up and reflect back on these forces, and to still preserve the power to generate new worlds of experience for their local communities.

In Fujian and along the South China coast, the history of local ritual traditions is linked to broader themes in local/transnational history, to the coastal trade routes of the Asian oceans. But before looking further afield it would be worthwhile to look into the past, in order to seek to understand the accumulation of the many layers of ritual form that have contributed to the village rituals of contemporary China.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Map 1: Satellite Map of the Putian Plain (color plates) is a satellite image taken in 2002 (Landsat7) of the Putian plain, showing the ring of mountains around the plain and the patchwork of irrigation canals. The inset map situates Putian on the Southeast China coast, south of Fuzhou and north of Xiamen and Quanzhou. *Map 2: Li sub-cantons and Regional Ritual Alliances* provides an overview of the local ritual system. *Maps 3 and 4* (color plates) provide three dimensional images of the Putian plain as seen from different points on the plain, the first gazing northwards past the volcanic cone of Mt Hu, the second looking eastwards from the Dongzhen reservoir in the hills above Putian see along the Mulan river towards the Xinghua Bay. These maps give a sense of the topography of the Putian plain. *Maps 5, 6, 7, and 8* (color plates) show the evolving shorelines of the Putian plains from ancient times to the Tang, then in the Song, and finally in the mid-Ming, when the reclaiming of the Putian plain was completed.

The Putian plain formed along the coast of the Xinghua Bay over thousands of years as a thin band of alluvial soil deposited by three major rivers and many streams flowing out of a semi-circle of mountains, and pushed upwards by the action of the sea. In ancient times, the Putian plain was originally under 30 meters of sea water, as can be seen in *Map 5: Ancient Shoreline of the Putian Plain*. Extensive land reclamation and the establishment of the first major irrigation canals resulted in the marked expansion of the Putian plain, as seen in *Map 7: Song shoreline of the Putian Plain*. *Map 8: Ming-Qing shoreline of the Putian Plain* shows that land continued to be reclaimed, further expanding the Putian plain, up to the beginning of the Qing dynasty, putting increasing pressure on the various irrigation systems.¹

The first inhabitants of this region were a mix of sea-side dwelling peoples or fishing-people living along the shore and the rivers,

¹ For a discussion of technical aspects of the historical processes of irrigation and land reclamation in Holland, see Wagret 1968. On contemporary Chinese irrigation management, including in the Putian area, see Vermeer, 1978.

and settlers of the mountain slopes. The former peoples were called *Danmin* 疊民 by the Han Chinese, while the latter were called the *She* 畏. Surviving groups of both these early settlers can still be found in Fujian. Early Chinese sources refer to the peoples of this area as the hundred *Yue* 越 peoples.

Early in the Han, Han Chinese explorers began to move into South-east China. Some of these figures attained legendary status, such as the nine *He* 何 brothers, who are said to have moved from Jiangxi into Xianyou in the Han Yuanshou 元狩 period (122–117 BCE). Their legend is recounted in the *Xianxizhi* 仙溪志 of 1257, one of the earliest local gazetteers. After studying Daoist arts with Liu An, compiler of the *Huainanzi* 淮南子, they moved into Fujian, eventually settling at the Jiulihu 九鯉湖 (Nine Carp Lake), above a waterfall. There they proceeded to refine elixirs of immortality. According to an eighth century inscription, they succeeded at this task, became immortals, and transformed into nine carp spirits (hence the name of the lake). They were worshipped as protector deities of the region. To this day, people sleep in the caverns near the lake, known as the Jiulihu 九鯉湖 (Nine Carp Lake), to receive visits from the gods in their dreams. A manual of dream interpretation has been written to help explicate their dream visions.

Shortly after this period, Han Chinese armies attacked the Kingdom of Min Yue. According to some local sources, Yu Shan 余善, the King of Min-Yue, fled to the mountains of Putian and Xianyou, where he built a fortress to resist the Han (*Putian xianzhi*, 1994: 8). After his defeat, the Putian area fell under the ostensible rule of the Kuaiji 會稽 Commandery of Zhejiang. Han Chinese military colonies and settlers began to slowly move into the mountain valleys and coastal regions of Fujian, where they set up a military colony near the Wuyi Mountains in northern Fujian. Complete colonization of Fujian, including the Putian area, would take several hundred years (Bielenstein 1959).

Efforts to establish an administrative center in Putian were made in 568 and in 589, but these were abandoned. Finally, in the early Tang (Wude 6), in 623, Putian city was made into a district capital. In the Tang, the site would have been very close to the ancient shoreline of the Xinghua Bay. *Map 6: Tang Shoreline of the Putian Plain* shows the locations of several reservoirs which provided irrigation to the early settlements along the thin stretches of the Putian plain. Hanjiang is said to have been founded in 627 at the site of a sluice-gate emptying into the sea (the original name was Hantou 潘頭). A few other

villages on the Putian plain can be traced back to the Tang, including Hengtang.

The early encounter between Han Chinese military colonists and the indigenous inhabitants has not left much of historical record, but later mythological accounts provide some insights. The Ming or Qing novella, *Ping Min Shibadong* 平閩十八洞 (*The Pacification of the Eighteen Caverns of Fujian*), tells the story of the successful victory of Yang Wenguang, one of the famous Yang Family Generals, over barbarian tribes in Fujian in the Song dynasty. Most scholars agree this tale is in fact based on the exploits of Chen Yuanguang (d. 708), a Tang general, and his father Chen Zheng 陳政 (d. 677). Chen Zheng was sent with an army of 3600 troops to the southern part of Fujian in 669 to subdue indigenous peoples resisting Han settlement of the area. Chen Yuanguang took over the campaign after his father's death and fought until his death in battle in 708. His son brought the campaign to a successful close in 715.

In the novella, the Han Chinese hero defeats local inhabitants garrisoned in eighteen “cavern-fortress dwellings” across Fujian. Two of these are said to be located in the Putian area, namely the Zhenshendong 鎮山洞 (Mountain Fortress Cavern) led by He Tao 河濤 (lit. River wave) and his sworn brother Li Jinrong 李金容 (golden mien), and the Huangcaodong 黃草洞 (Yellow Grass Cavern) at the base of Hugong Mountain 壺公山, a volcanic cone-shaped mountain which dominates the view from every point in the Putian plain, led by one Du Yin 杜引. Local people living on Hugong Mountain claim that the “Cavern” in the myth is in fact a secluded valley with a lake, set deep inside the southern foothills of Hugong Mountain. According to the myth, once killed by the Chinese general, the leaders of the first cavern-fortress reverted back into a black snake and a golden carp respectively, while the leader of the Mt. Hogong Cavern turned into an earthworm. In the novella, the Han General magically defeats these shape-shifting monsters, and the local inhabitants gratefully accept his protection.² Li Yiyuan (1993) has suggested that these creatures

² Chen Yuanguang 陳元光 is widely worshipped as Kaizhang shengwang 開漳聖王 in the southern Minnan area, but his cult was not found in the Putian plains. Other Minnan gods are worshipped in Putian, such as Guangze zunwang 廣澤尊王 and Ciji zhenjun 慈濟真人, most likely as the result of late Ming and early Qing patterns of immigration to Putian from the greater Quanzhou and Xiamen regions.

may have been totemic representations of different sub-groups of Shê peoples.

A similar range of monstrous creatures, including floating shrimp and other denizens of river mouths and tidal pools, appear in the *Beidouxi* (*Play of the Northern Dipper*), a ritual marionette play which celebrates the magical victory of the Goddess Chen Jinggu 陳靖姑 over the Divine Mother of the Heavenly River and her shape-shifting, body-snatching, would-be assassins, who are after the baby of the Song Empress. After her victory, the soldiers of the Divine Mother of the Heavenly River bow down before the Goddess Chen Jinggu and join her entourage. In this way, she absorbs the powers of her defeated enemies, and turns their demonic energy into her own supernatural power. The play concludes by merging into a ritual for young children passing through the many gates of adversity (*guoguan* 過關). In another ritual play about the goddesses' powers over smallpox and childhood measles, Chen Jinggu defeats a massive black python and subdues a Tiger goddess, whose powers over smallpox are put to good use. This process of absorbing the powers of those she overcomes is also seen in her principal myth, recorded in the *Linshui Pingyaozhuān* 臨水平妖傳 (*Record of the Pacification of Demons by the Lady by the Side of the Water*). In this myth, Chen Jinggu becomes the goddess most closely associated with the fertility of Fujian, even as she battles an evil White Snake to the death. As young women, Chen Jinggu had refused to marry, preferring instead to join a sisterhood learning magical arts from a ritual master on Mount Lu. Later she relents to her parents' wishes, and marries. She is then called upon to perform an arduous rain-making ceremony. Prior to praying for rain to save the harvest, she has to abort her own fetus, but she places it in safekeeping under a magical protective spell, and in her mother's care. The spell is broken by her enemy, the White Snake, who tricks her mother into revealing the whereabouts of the fetus. The Snake then devours the fetus. At this point, Chen Jinggu begins to hemorrhage, but is saved by her ritual master. She recovers, and pursues the White Snake, which she ultimately defeats in a battle to the death. The snake is contained in a crevice beneath her throne in her temple in Gutian, north of Fuzhou. After her death, she continues to protect women in childbirth and children suffering from smallpox and measles.³

³ See the fascinating structural symbolic analysis of the legend of the goddess, her temple, and the lives of her female mediums in Brigitte Baptandier, *The Lady of Lin-*

In the Putian plain, Chen Jinggu is widely worshipped (see *Map 34: Distribution of temples dedicated to Chen Jinggu* below). She is found in special shrines called the Lufu 魯府 (Ministry of Smallpox), where she stands at the ready with a sword in one hand and a buffalo horn in the other to summon spirit soldiers.⁴ To her right is an older gentleman (*Lufu zhenjun* 魯府真君) and to her left an older women (*Lufu furen* 魯府夫人), who is sometimes joined by an old aunt (*Lufu yima* 魯府姨媽). This stratum of the local popular pantheon is most likely very ancient.

Yet another tale of magical victory, in this case also to the death, over a *jiao* 蛟 (a form of dangerous dragon or crocodile), is told of Wu Xing 吳興, the founder of the Yanshou irrigation system in the northern Putian plain in the Jianzhong period 建中 (780–783).

At the time there was a wicked *jiao* 蛟 which caused several breaks in the dikes. Wu Xing grabbed his sword and told the people, “If the water runs blue-green then the demon is dead, but if it runs red, than I am dead.” Then he entered the water and battled the demon. Three days later a sword covered in blood washed up on Wu Xing’s shore. Wu and the demon were both dead. The local people then erected a temple to make sacrifices to him.” (*Bamin tongzhi* 2:60:410, based on Clark, trans., 2007:173 (with minor modifications).⁵

This tale of a cosmic struggle against indigenous chthonic powers ends with the apotheosis of the Han Chinese settler. Many related records of magical battles over snake cults and indigenous traditions of shamanism survive in Fujian. Wu Xing’s temple was an important higher order temple in the Putian plains, and it is visited to this day on his birthday not only by the villages in the immediate surrounding ritual alliance, but also by members of the Wu 吳 lineage living

shui: A Chinese Female Cult. translated by Kristin Ingrid Fryklund, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008.

⁴ In Putian, the character 魯 is written with the illness radical in this context. This should be recalled by readers throughout these two volumes.

⁵ Other records repeat this story with embellishments, including an earlier account by Liu Kezhuang (1187–1269) from the Song Xianchun period 1265–74 (Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1996: No. 49, pp. 55–56, and a later account by Zheng Yue 鄭岳 in 1538 (Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1996: No. 144, pp. 167–168. On the *jiao*, see Schafer 1980:25–27. Clark points out in a recent paper the link between the *jiao* and the crocodile in Minnan sources. He draws as well on Han Yu’s famous missive to the crocodiles of Chaozhou to argue that these accounts are metaphors of the struggle between Han Chinese and indigenous civilizations, and that the death of Wu Xing implies the inevitable intermixture of these cultures and their sources of cosmic force.

in the villages of Xizhu 西洙 and Xitou 溪頭 some kilometers away. Even more intriguing is the fact that his sister, the goddess Wushi shengfei 吳氏聖妃, is worshipped even more widely than Wu Xing 吳興, in dozens of villages on the northwest edge of the Putian plain. This goddess is but one of many such supernatural females who seem to have dominated the magical universe of the early inhabitants of the Putian plains, and perhaps of the indigenous inhabitants of the region as well.

Many other gods and goddesses found in the region appear to have been involved in similar struggle against local indigenous powers, often represented in serpentine or demonic form. The character for Min (Fujian) features a worm, or a serpent, inside a doorway. Zhang-gong shengjun 張公聖君, the wild-haired, barefoot Daoist exorcist, clutches a snake in one hand. He too is said to have plunged into a pool to kill a dragon. Sanping zushi 三坪祖師, the Buddhist monk of the Zhangzhou 漳州 region, has snakes coiled around his throne. The Buddhist monk of the Youzhengyan 檨貞巖 Cliffside Monastery in Xianyou is said to have turned a huge and dangerous python into stone.⁶ Qingshui zushi 清水祖師, the black faced monk of Penglai 蓬萊, Anxi 安溪, had his complexion smoked black in a magical battle with indigenous spirits, whom he defeated and enlisted as his gatekeepers. Over and over again, these motifs are played out in the story of the early spiritual conquest of Fujian by Han Chinese Buddhist and Daoist thaumaturges. The Han colonization of Fujian appears to have advanced on two fronts. On the one hand Buddhist and Daoist ritual specialists competed with, and perhaps absorbed elements of, local ritual traditions, in a magical conquest of the region. On the other hand, military leaders put down armed uprisings, established military colonies, and paved the way for complete Chinese administration, with registered populations paying taxes in grain and performing corvée labor for the representatives of the imperium.

Shê leaders were still active in the Xinghua area into the late Ming, as in the case of Lei Wu 雷五, who participated in a revolt in 1588, as recorded in a stone inscription preserved in the Xianyou Confucian temple. But later evidence of Shê communities in the Putian area is difficult to find. The survey of temples on the Putian plains below located only two Pangu dijun 盤古帝君 statues, the main deity of the Shê. The

⁶ Described by Clark (2007:172–3, citing the *Bamin tongzhi* 12:219 and the (Qianlong) *Xianyou tongzhi* 3:4a, 9b.

1991 census lists under 1500 Shê inhabitants of Putian county. Larger communities of Shê can however still be found in northeast Fujian.

In addition to the Shê peoples of mountainous Putian, the coastal areas were no doubt inhabited by peoples known to the Chinese as *Danmin*, often referred to as boat people. Dan communities can still be found in the Fuzhou Nantai area (see Szonyi 2002). A Song scholar-literati surnamed Lin remarked that Meizhou island, now the site of the massive Tianhou Temple (Goddess of Heaven) Temple dedicated to a local woman Mazu 媽祖 (Lin Moniang), was an idyllic island whose few inhabitants were illiterate, and that it would be a great location to build a get-away study. This would imply that Mazu may have been an illiterate *Danmin* shamaness herself (Zheng Zhenman 1996). Only later, after she had received official canonization from the court, would Lin lineage genealogies claim a place for her as one of their own glorious ancestors.

Cai Xiang 蔡襄 (1012–1067), a local son of Xinghua and a renowned Prime Minister in the Song dynasty famously remarked that “the people of Min (Fujian) worship demons and delight in ghosts” in an early record of the shamanistic cults of the region. Some of the most vehement of the fundamentalist Neo-Confucian followers of Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130–1200) who attacked so-called heterodox cults, such as Chen Chun 陳淳 (1153–1217), were from Fujian. Perhaps their insistence on establishing such strict boundaries against heterodoxy should be seen as evidence of the persistence of hybrid cultural forms, combining Han Chinese traditions of spirit possession with more unfamiliar acts of possession by indigenous spirits and cosmic forces.

The first recorded Buddhist monastery in Putian was the Golden Immortal Monastery, bequeathed in 589 by the Zheng brothers, who converted their Hushan shutang 湖山書堂 study hall, built in 558. This monastery was later renamed the Guanghuasi 廣化寺, which is the largest Buddhist monastery in Putian to this day. Many more Buddhist monasteries would be built during the reign of Wang Shen-zhi 王審知 (862–925) Emperor of Min. The Song scholar Li Junfu 李俊甫 (1217 *jinshi*) stated in his *Puyang bishi* 莆陽比事 (*Putian Miscellany*) that: “Wang Yanjun 王延鈞 of the Min upheld the Buddhist law, and in a single year ordained 20,000 monks. The great lineages of Putian competed to donate funds and property and built over 500 Buddhist monasteries.”⁷ The (Ming Hongzhi) *Xinghua Fuzhi* 興化府志

⁷ Li Junfu 李俊甫 *Puyang bishi* 莆陽比事, j. 1, p. 3a.

records that in the Southern Song there were 246 Buddhist establishments in Putian. At its peak, the Nanshan Guanghuasi 南山廣化寺 had over ten monastic estates, with over 120 *an* (smaller shrines or nunneries). It is estimated that Buddhist monastic estates controlled over one third of the land in Putian in the early Song (Chikusa 1982). These estates played a crucial role in building up local infrastructure, including irrigation systems, roads, and bridges.

The first Daoist temple, the Xuanmiaoguan 玄妙觀, was built in 628 CE.⁸ The earliest private Confucian school was the Chengzhu shutang 澄渚書堂 built by Lin Yun 林蘊 in the Dali period (766–779). Government Confucian schools were first built in 772. With these cultural institutions in place, alongside military colonies and administrative and taxation centers, large scale Han Chinese cultural imperialism, referred to as *jiaohua* 教化 (transformation through education), got underway. A protective wall of just over two *li* was built around the administrative offices of Putian in 983. A larger city wall of seven *li* with five gates was only built in 1121. The walls were expanded to over ten *li* in 1430. They stood over twenty feet high, were partially encircled by a moat, and withstood all but two sieges, those of the Mongol armies in 1277, and those of the pirate armies in 1562.

As Benedict Anderson (2006) pointed out, this was not a modern-nation state but an archaic empire, in which power worked in very different ways. Primarily centered in ritual sites of contact with cosmological forces, such as the Altar to Heaven, power worked as a center of attraction through the imitation of ritual acts. Ritual forms were developed that could be imitated through participation in scaled down versions at lower levels throughout the empire. Scaled down versions of similar rites were imposed on the localities, in a system of ritualized hierarchical encompassment. There are however limits to encompassment, acknowledged by this system. Because such imperial borders

⁸ As noted below, Daoist ritual masters of the southern Zhengyi (Orthodox Unity) tradition worked mainly out of their home altars, rather than being based in temples. However, some Daoist masters were stationed in grand temples in Putian City. In addition to the Xuanmiaoguan, the Wanshougong was built in the Yuan Yanyou period (1314–1320) by a member of the Fang lineage, on the stipulation that his descendants should be the Daoist abbots of the temple. Daoists were also active in the City God temple of Putian, built in Ming Hongwu 3 (1370). Daoist directors of this temple were active in renovation projects in Wanli 3 (1575), Wanli 19 (1591) and again in Wanli 34 (1606). Daoist ritual masters were again in charge of repairs in Kangxi 30 (1691). For further details see the Qianlong (*Putian xianzhi*), j. 4.46a, b., p. 168.

are porous, and because the Others' attractions to and involvement in the ritual system are by definition sporadic or strategic, power only works as a center of attraction, not as an all-encompassing totality. This mode of power does not equate 'being Chinese' with a modern, air-tight notion of "cultural identity". Such a mode of power assumes the existence of a broad continuum stretching from indigenous practices and rites to more acceptable "Han" ritual activity. There were no lack of later efforts to impose a more systematic version of a continuous cosmology of imperial *magical* power stretching from the Altar of Heaven to the local altars of the City God temple and the Lishetan 里社壇 Altars of the Soil and Grain, and on down to all households ostensibly practicing Zhu Xi's *Family Rituals*. However, these ideological attempts at systematization of the source, nature, and reach of imperial cosmic power encountered a complex and continuously shifting ground of local cosmic forces expressed in a variety of ritual forms, as well as internal diversity and challenges at the discursive level and at the level of ritual practice provided by different kinds of Buddhist, Daoist, and Confucian theorists and practitioners.

Secondly, Anderson notes that power was maintained through hierogamies, (cosmically inflected) marriage alliances at the court amongst the aristocracy. With the fall of the aristocratic, oligarchic order of the Tang dynasty and the Song expansion of Han control into the south, many local lineages would compete to enter into the court circles of power through intermarriage. However, marriage strategies between local elites remained an important medium for the circulating and reaffirming of power at the local level (Clark, 2007: ch. 4). Nonetheless, even here the potential for hybrid mixes was great, as many indigenous inhabitants must have married into Han Chinese families in Putian. The earliest Han Chinese settlers on the narrow Putian plain most likely arrived in groups of kin and many dependents. Their first task was to reclaim stretches of mud-flats from the sea, building small dikes and creating a series of small settlements along the coast. Many of these areas are still named after the kinship groups that reclaimed them from the sea, as can be seen in the survey or in Zheng Zhenman's essay (Part Two below). Only after several contiguous pieces of land had been reclaimed from the sea would state authorities attempt to construct a sea-dike to link them together and protect them from floods or storms.

Land reclamation and irrigation

The first era of the reclamation of the Putian plains lasted from the Tang through the Five Dynasties, and was characterized by the digging of reservoirs for irrigation of the narrow coastal plain (the location of these reservoirs can be seen on *Map 6: Tang Shorelines of the Putian Plain*). These included early efforts of Wu Xing to construct the Yanshou Weir north of Putian City in the 780's, mentioned above. In Tang Yuanhe 8 (813) a military colony was established on the southern side of the Xinghua bay under the Surveillance Commissioner Pei Ceyuan 裴次元, who dug the Guoqing Reservoir for the Han Chinese troops and settlers of that region (*Qianlong Putian xianzhi*, j.3.32a). The reservoir has now become the 國清塘 Guoqing Lake.

The second era in the reclaiming of the Putian plain was during the Song. At that time a series of weirs were built along the rivers flowing into the Xinghua Bay to divert water into a system of major irrigation channels and canals which were also dug is this period. From the Yuan to the mid-Ming, these irrigation systems were filled in by digging of secondary and tertiary canals and the expansion and continual construction of sea dikes. Through a long process of the construction of irrigation and the reclamation of land from the sea, three large and relatively independent irrigation systems were developed. These are the: 1) Nanyang Southern irrigated plain with the Mulan Weir 木蘭陂 (1068–1083) at its origin; 2) the Beiyang Northern irrigated plain 北洋水利系统 with the Yanshou Weir 延壽陂 (780–783), the Taiping Weir 太平陂 (1056–1063) and the Shihua Weir 使華陂 at its multiple starting points; and the 3) Jiuliyang 九里洋水利系统 with the Nan'an Weir 南安陂 (977) at its origin.⁹ Maps of the main features of these irrigation systems can be seen below.

The shape and distribution of villages in the Putian coastal area is closely linked to the development of the irrigation systems. Settlements in the area prior to the Song were mostly along the edges of the coastal plain in protected mountain valleys and low lying hills, especially those

⁹ See Li Tingshui 林汀水: “Cong dilixue guandian kan Putian pingyuan de kaifa (From a geographical perspective looking at the development of the Putian plain) 從地理學觀點看莆田平原的開發” in *Zhongguo shehui jingjishi yanjiu (Journal of Chinese socio-economic history)* 中國社會經濟史研究, 1986.2; see also Morita Akira 森田明. “Fukkenshō ni okeru suiri kyōdōtai ni tsuite” 福建省における水利共同體について, in *Rekishigaku kenkyō 歷史學研究 (Historical Research)*, Vol. 261 (1962), pp. 19–28.

close to sources of fresh water such as valley streams and coastal reservoirs. Because large scale irrigation had not been developed, these settlements were widely scattered, and there must have been many boat people living off fishing along the coast.¹⁰ Over the Song and Yuan dynasties, following the gradual expansion of the great irrigation systems, settlements spread into the center of the plain and along the coast. These newly established settlements usually had corresponding irrigation canals and protective dikes, therefore many of them have the words *tang* (塘 reservoir), *dai* (埭 dike), or *dun* (墩 mound) as part of their names. During the Ming and Qing, new mudflats (*daitian* 埼田) were constantly being reclaimed from the sea beyond the seawalls, so that we find the expressions “first dike”, “second dike” and “third dike” frequently used. The number of coastal villages in these newly reclaimed zones continued to expand. By the late Qing, the Mulan irrigation system of the Southern plain provided water to 102 villages, while the Yanshou irrigation system of the Northern plain serviced 172 villages, the Taiping irrigation system watered twenty-eight villages, and the Shihua weir system irrigated twenty-nine villages.¹¹

The extraordinary success of these efforts to reclaim land from the sea and to irrigate this land for agriculture can be seen in *Map 4: The Song Shoreline of the Putian Plain, and Map 5: Ming Qing Shoreline of the Putian Plain* (see color plates). The last several hundred years have seen a much slower pace of change. Erosion and silting have extended the mud-flats along the coast, and in a few areas these have been reclaimed for agriculture, but the system as a whole reached the limits of possible physical expansion by the late Ming. From that time on, the emphasis was more on maintenance of the system than on land reclamation.

The Yanshou Weir and its main irrigation canals were established in the Northern Irrigated Plain in the mid Tang (780–783). At this point, several large lineage groups each began separately to reclaim patches of land from the sea, establishing various independent reservoirs and dikes, such as the Lindai (Lin dike) 林埭, the Yetang (Ye reservoir)

¹⁰ According to the (Hongzhi) *Chongkan Xinghua fuzhi* 重刊興化府志 (2007:313) in the Ming there were three Hebosuo 河泊所 (Fishery Tax Stations) established in Putian, which each year took in over 3,500 piculs of “fishery rice tax” 魚課米.

¹¹ See Chen Chiyang 陳池養, *Putian shuilizhi* (Putian irrigation gazetteer 莆田水利志, j. 2. *Beitang* (Weirs and reservoirs) 陂塘, published in Qing Guangxu 1 (1875, reprinted in 1974). These late Qing totals of 102 and 229 villages can be compared to current figures of 297 for the Southern Plain and 435 for the Northern plain.

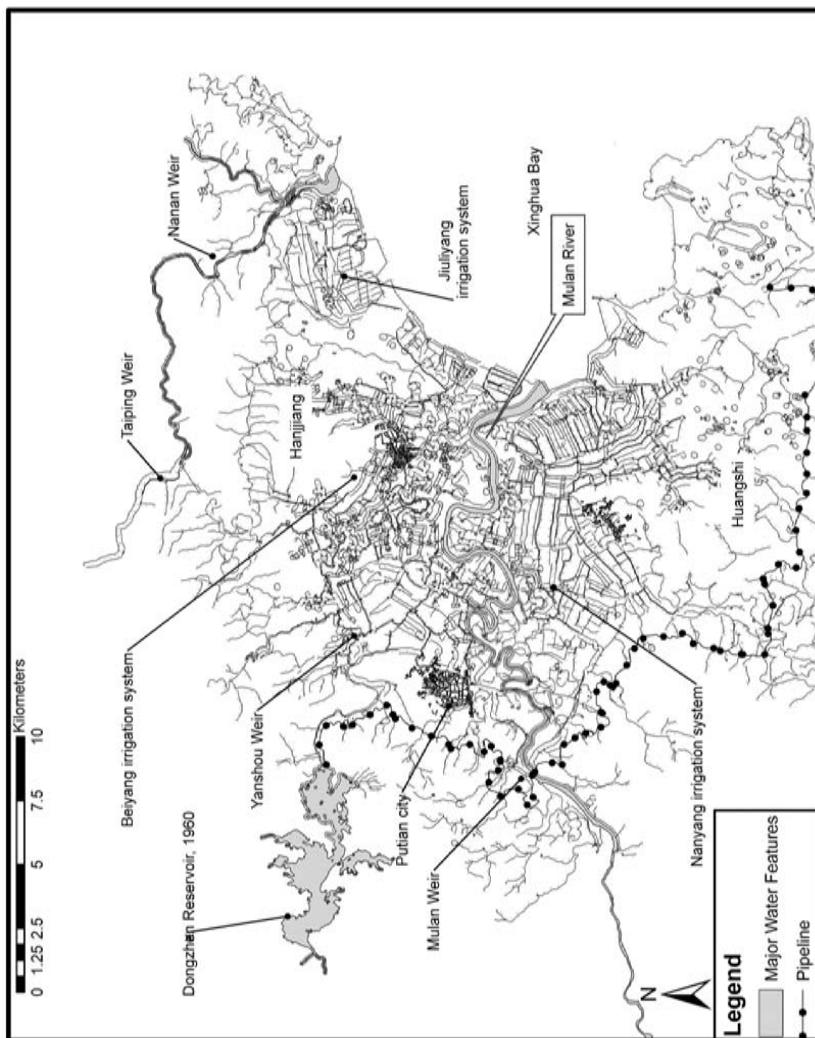
葉塘, and many similarly named sites. At that time, several Buddhist monastic estates also were active in reclaiming stretches of land, such as the Guohuan monastic estate 國懽院田, the Cishou monastic estate 慈壽院田, and the Shangsheng monastic estate 上生院田.

The Mulan weir was completed in the Southern Irrigated plain between 1064–1083. After two unsuccessful efforts, the first by Lady Qian Siniang 錢四娘 (who died in the process in 1064), the second some years later by Lin Congshi 林從世, one Li Hong, also known as Li Zhangzhe 李長者, succeeded in constructing the weir from 1077 to 1083. Both Lady Qian and Li Hong are worshipped in the southern irrigated plain (see *Maps 38: Distribution of temples dedicated to Li Zhangzhe and Map 39: Distribution of temples dedicated to Lady Qian Siniang*). At that time much of the labor and funding, as well as the land, came from the so-called “Fourteen Surnames” 十四大家— including the three Yu 三余 surname groups or lineage branches, the seven Zhu 七朱, the Lin 林, Chen 陳, Wu 吳 and the Gu 顧. Afterwards, these Fourteen Surnames controlled and managed the irrigation system for a long time, and became the most influential social group in the area.

The Taiping Weir 太平陂 was built in the Northern Irrigated plain in 1056–1063. At first the Taiping irrigation system was first managed by the “Eight Great Surnames”, but later it was taken over by the Buddhist monks of Nangshan Monastery. The date of construction of the Shihua Weir in the Northern irrigated plain is unclear, but from the early Ming the irrigation system was under the control of the Fang lineage. The Nanan Weir was constructed in 977, but in the Southern Song and the Ming it was controlled in succession by the Fang, the Huang and the Wang lineages, who managed its reconstruction. The coastal areas of the Jiuliyang irrigated plain were also reclaimed by various lineages independently, as can be seen by the names of villages and reclaimed land in that region such as Wu mound 吳墩, You mound 游墩, Chen mound 陳墩, Ou dike 歐埭, He dike 何埭, Zhuo dike 卓埭, and Eastern Cai dike 東蔡埭.¹²

The historical evolution of irrigation systems, the environmental constraints on settlements, and the modes of lineage and religious organization all had determining influences on the construction of the space of activity of local Putian society. The evolution of lineage

¹² Chen Chiyang 陳池養, *Putian shuilizhi* 莆田水利志, j. 2, 3: Weirs and Reservoirs陂塘.



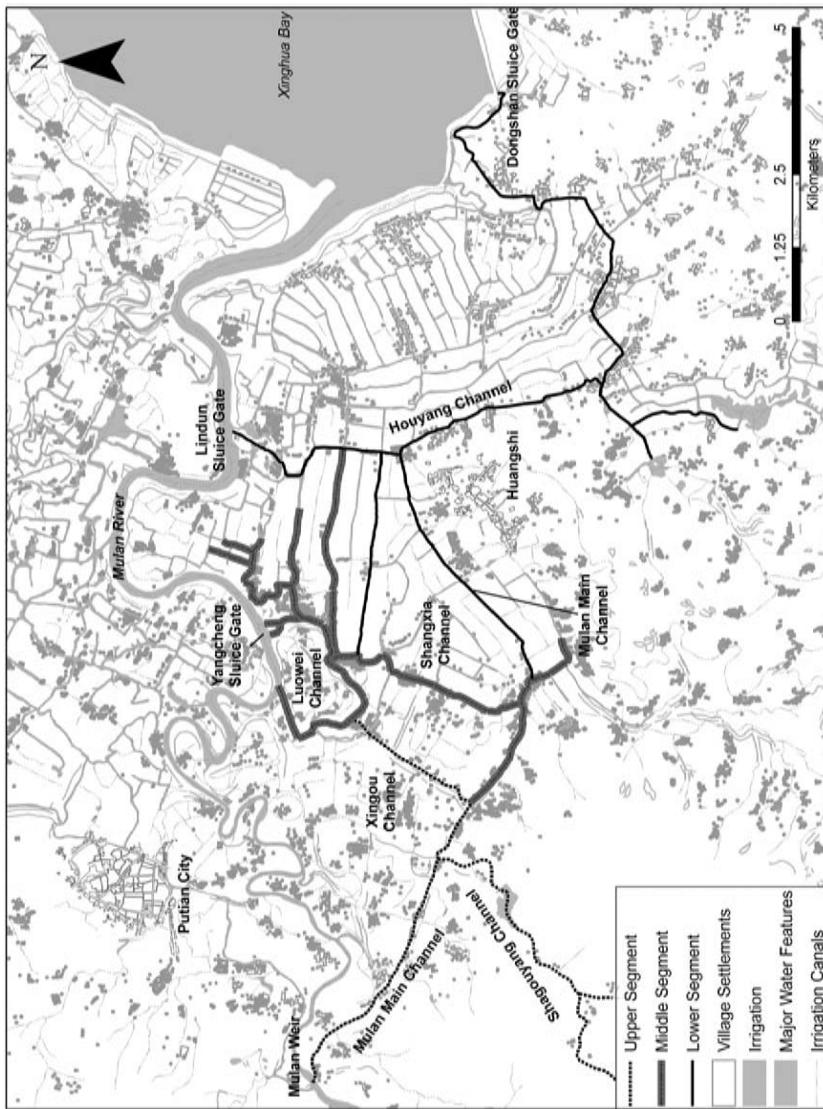
Map 13: Main irrigation networks of the Putian plains

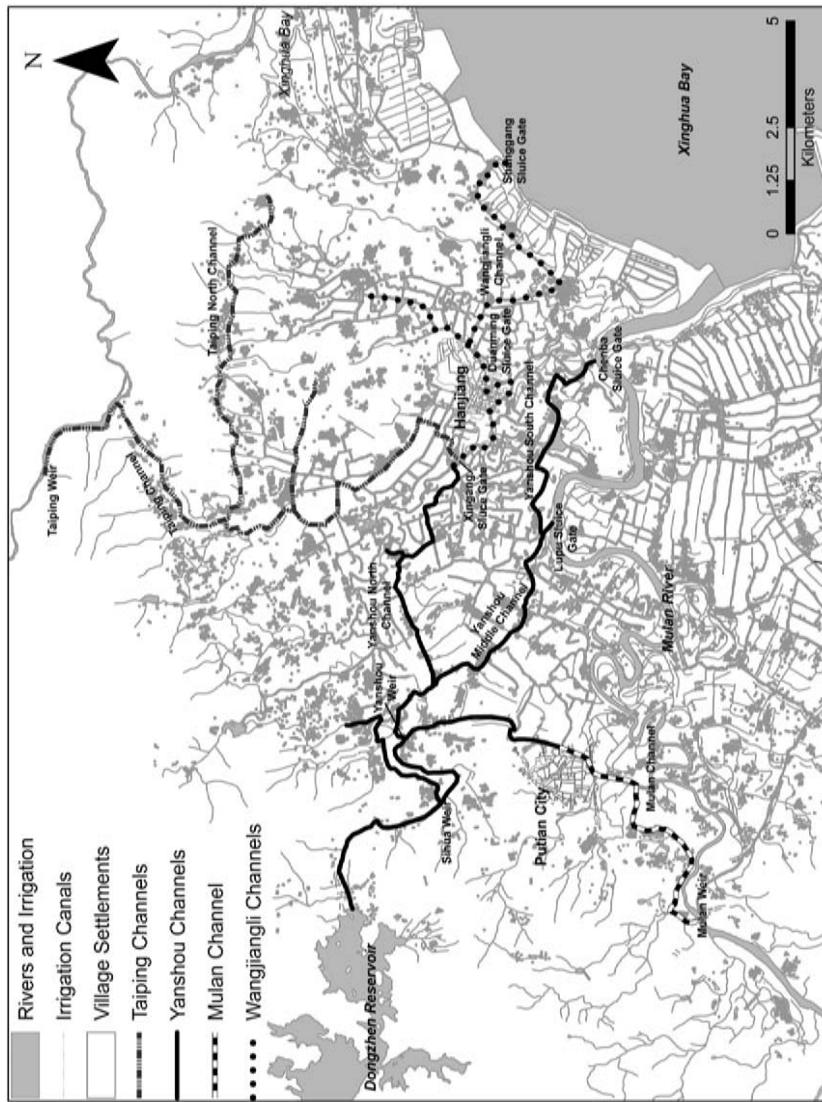
forms and religious organizations in the Putian plains were controlled to a large degree by the development of the irrigation system and the physical environment of the local settlements. Maps 14, 15 and 16 below outline the layout of the major irrigation systems of the Putian Plains. These systems are described in more detail in Volume Two.

Buddhist monastic estates and the rise of lineages

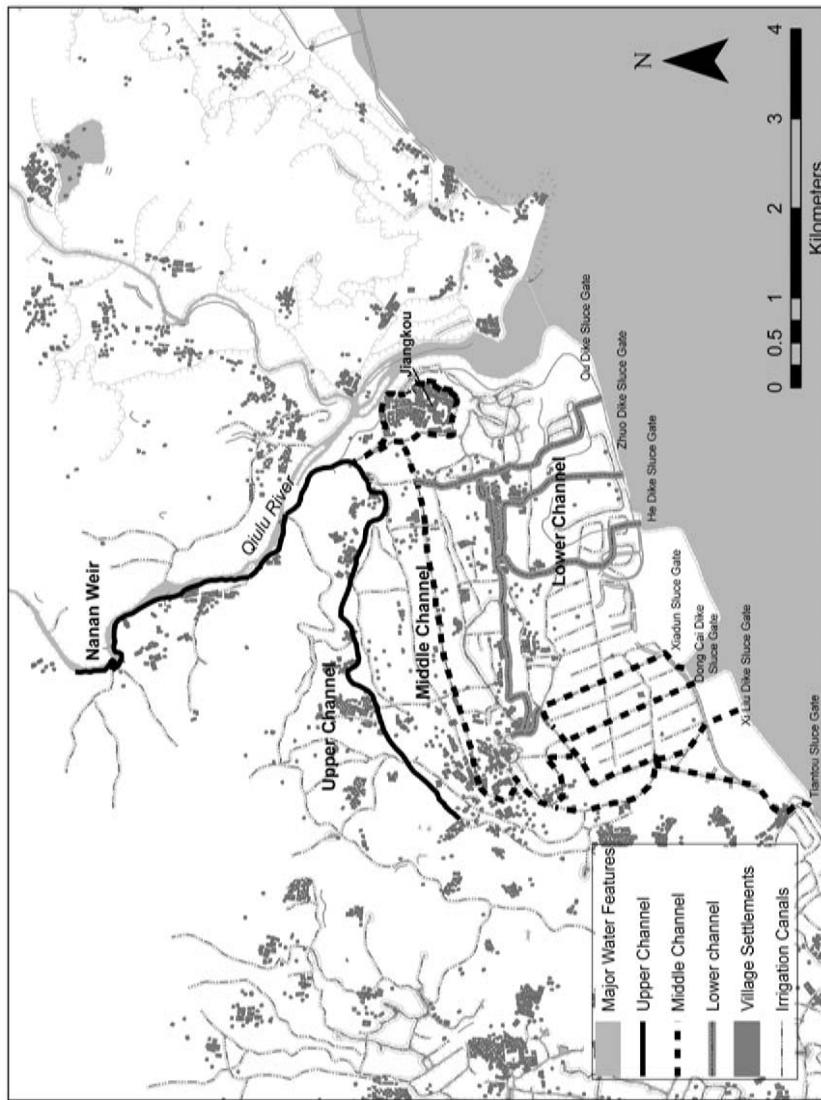
As mentioned above, Buddhist monasteries played an important role in the management of some of the early irrigation systems and in the reclamation of the land of the Putian plain. Buddhist monasteries were built at an escalating rate from the sixth century through the Tang, and especially during the Min Empire (909–945) (Schafer, 1954). Buddhism consolidated its crucial role in the Putian plains during the Song dynasty. Many early Buddhist monks established themselves in remote locations in mountain valleys. To the Han Chinese settlers and indigenous peoples of the area they must have appeared as powerful magicians capable of subduing demons and wild animals and conquering the wilderness. Other Buddhist monks organized efficient monastic estates, which rapidly filled up with monks seeking Buddhist training and others evading taxes. This range of Buddhist monks, from mountain dwelling magician monks to powerful abbots of local monasteries, can still be found today in Putian. A third important intermediate category is the Buddhist monks who perform rituals. These monks form ritual troupes which are called on to perform consecrations of temples and ancestral halls, funerals and requiem services, and *pudu* rites of universal salvation for the hungry ghosts in villages throughout the Putian plain. Finally, one should add in the many lay Buddhist groups who can be found in Putian (see below), who perform their own rituals for their communities of initiates.

Many Buddhist monasteries, especially those built near to the tombs of early founding ancestors of the Han Chinese lineages of Putian, were originally supported in large part by funds donated by these lineages. In return they were expected to perform sacrificial rites at the tombs of these ancestors, and in special graveside shrines dedicated to them. Sometimes these halls were independent structures (*yingtang* 影堂, image halls) inside of larger monastic compounds. By the late Song, these Buddhist monasteries had become the target on the one hand of local officials seeking to raise taxes, and the object of frustration





Map 15: Beiyang irrigation systems (of the northern plain)



Map 16: Jiuliang irrigation system (of the northeastern Putian plain)

on the other hand of their sponsoring lineages. These conflicts and tensions are expressed in several stone inscriptions from the time, which are translated and discussed in the essay by Zheng Zhenman in Part 2 below.

Suffice it to say here that by the late Song several lineages had decided to take over the ancestral worship activities formerly carried out by the Buddhist monks. A number of these lineages began to experiment with new forms of ancestral worship, already in the Song dynasty. Zhu Xi commented on one such lineage, the Huang 黃 of Huangxiang 黃巷, in a stone inscription.¹³ He expressed admiration for their ability to maintain ancestral sacrifices over several generations. In fact, in doing so they contravened key elements of his own prescriptions for ancestral worship as recorded in his *Family Rituals*. Later scholars would greatly extend the reach of ancestral worship beyond the limits described in this text, nevertheless thereby paradoxically fulfilling a central vision of Zhu Xi and Cheng Yi 程頤 (1033–1108) of bringing ancestral worship to the common people.

According to Clark's (2007) analysis, early Han settlers who had moved to Putian and Xianyou counties in the Six Dynasties and the early Tang sought to distinguish themselves from a late Tang, Five Dynasties newly arrived elite associated with Wang Shenzhi 王審知 and his army from Gushi 固始 who founded the Min Kingdom. Clark notes that many of the earlier lineages of the Xinghua region had by this point lived in the area for five generations. They had already reached the limits of acceptable ancestral worship (restricted to five generations for officials). In order to stake their claim to official lineage status, several of these early arrivals began to break the restrictions on the limits of ancestral worship and to worship their original ancestor in central China, along with their Putian founding ancestor, and eventually all subsequent generations of ancestors, especially those who had attained to official position. This led to the establishment of elaborate ancestral halls, with multiple niches for different categories of ancestors, all of which went far beyond the limits of the classical

¹³ Zhu Xi 朱熹, *Tang Guizhou feng Kaiguogong shi Zhongyi Huanggong citangji* 唐桂州刺史封開國公諡忠義黃公祠堂記 (1196), in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials on the History of Religion in Fujian: Xinghua Region* 興化府分冊 Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1995: No. 29, pp. 30–31. See the important discussion of this text in Clark 2007:292, 317–318.

ritual system (which restricted the number of generation that could be worshipped, and restricted such worship to the official class). Many of the debates about ancestral worship of this period, and continuing into the Ming dynasty, centered on the notion that “Li yi yi qi” 禮以義起 (Ritual arises from the meanings (or intentions, of those performing the rites). This was a revolutionary slogan which allowed for changes to take place in the forms of ancestral worship as long as the intentions of those performing the new rites were judged to be sincere and acceptable.

Clark’s (2007) hypothesis about the origins of innovations in ancestral worship in the Xinghua area is stimulating. Nonetheless, some problems remain with his conjecture. First of all, as he notes, there are no extant genealogical charts, registers, or stone inscriptions dating from the late Song that would clearly indicate which ancestors were worshipped by which set of descendants. Clearly only a few families in the late Tang and Five Dynasties period could have had the local status and the heritage of official rank needed to claim such rights of worship, although many others would have imitated them and invented their own pedigrees. Even the earliest Han Chinese settlers would have brought along a host of dependents and hangers-on of different surnames (although many of these may have sought to change their names to that of their patrons). Local families of non-Han or mixed background must have greatly outnumbered Han settlers from the central plains, although many of them too may have sought to intermarry or to otherwise link their family names to rising lineages. The extraordinary leap in Song dynasty population figures for the Xinghua area suggests that many local ethnic inhabitants must have decided to register their households on the tax ledgers in order to enjoy benefits and protection of membership in the Chinese imperial state.¹⁴ Thus many different groups, some of whom may have had different kinship structures, would perhaps have had an interest in pushing reforms in the ancestral system. Furthermore, the push for transformation of the classical ritual order of the lineage could also arise internally within a lineage whose major descent line (the line of descent of the eldest son) had failed, requiring the other minor branches of the lineage (the

¹⁴ Clark 1991: ch. 5 discusses available population figures for the Xinghua region. These move from 33,735 in 980 to 55,237 in 1080 and 72,363 in 1190–4. In 980 *kehu* 客戶 (guest, or migrant households) made up over 60% of the population, but this percentage dropped to around 40% in later figures.

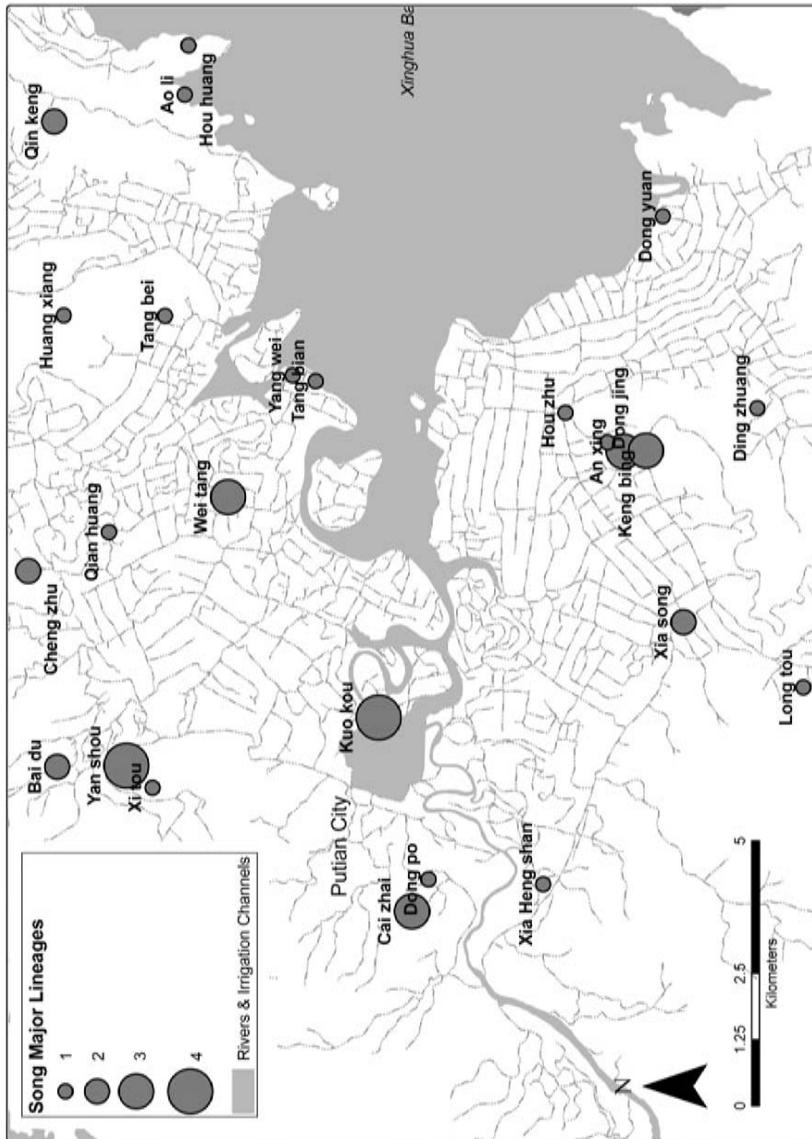
lines of descent of the other sons) to step in and conduct the ritual sacrifices, or build or repair the ancestral hall, thereby overstepping their ritually prescribed roles. This kind of structural-transformative explanatory model may also help us understand some aspects of the spread of new lineage practices in the area.

Lineages only achieved widespread ascendancy in Putian in the late Song and early Ming, when they were able to take control of considerable landholdings from the Buddhist monastic estates that had played such a major role in the area in the Song (when they owned one third of cultivable land). In the late Song, only a handful of lineages had established Family Temples or Ancestral Halls. By the mid-Ming, many more such halls had been built across the Putian plains, as more and more local sons passed the examinations and attained official office. The survey of village temples in the Putian plains mentions over one hundred commemorative archways set up in honor of such success stories in the Ming (see *Map 19: Distribution of Memorial Archways Within Ritual Alliance Boundaries*). Sadly, only a few of these archways still survive.

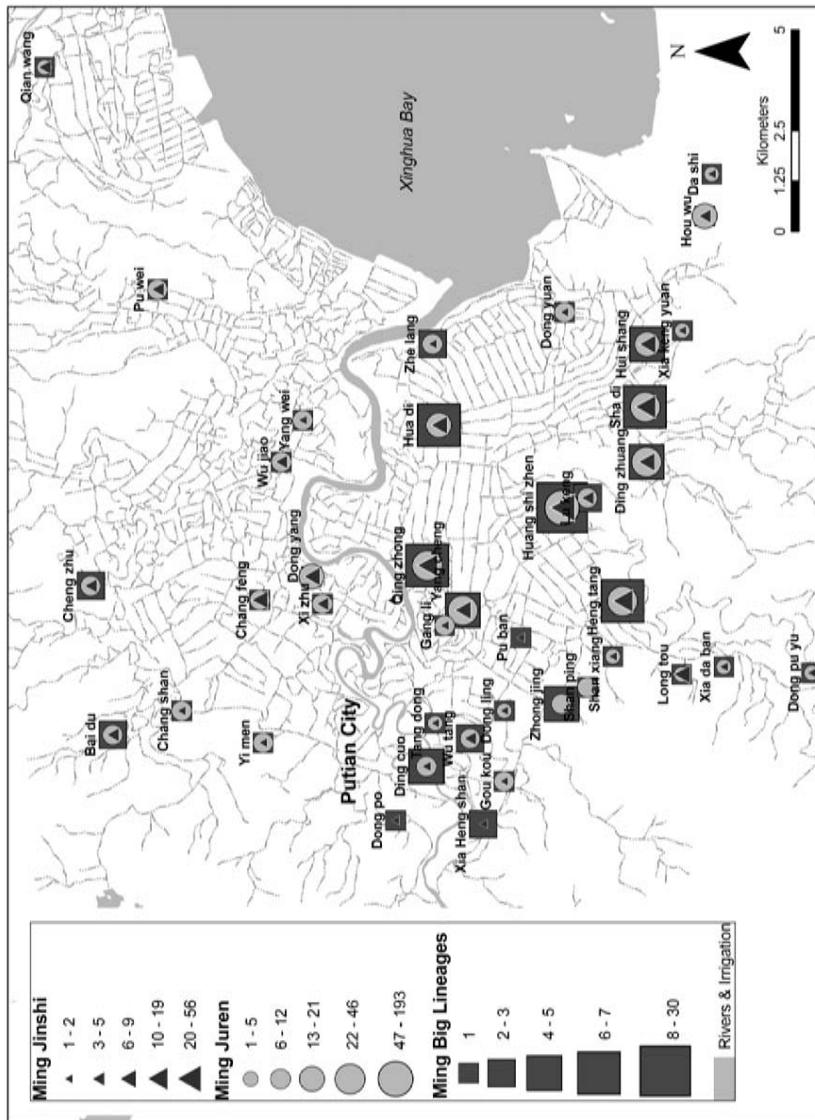
The next pair of maps explores the question of the distribution of the main lineages in the Putian plains. Map 17 of the distribution of Song major lineages shows that many of these groups were concentrated in or near Putian city (Kuokou was the main port), near the Yanshou Weir to the north of Putian, or along the Southern irrigated plain towards Huangshi town. According to Li Junfu's *Puyang bishi*, the great majority of the main lineages lived within the walled city of Putian, but this is not shown on the following map.

Map 18: Major Lineages, jinshi (Metropolitan Graduates) and juren (Provincial Graduates) in the Ming Dynasty reveals the rising prominence of the lineages of the southern irrigated plain. Notice the concentration of elites in newly reclaimed lands along the banks of the Mulan river. Observe also the relative lack of elite lineages in the Jiuliang region to the northeast of the Putian plain. This is the region that has the most developed tradition of collective spirit medium trainings and performances. These distributions indicate the long history of the development of distinct sub-cultures within different regions of the Putian plains.

A number of these lineages were celebrated with the bestowal of a memorial archway in commemoration of the success in the examinations and official career of their native sons. *Map 19: Memorial*



Map 17: Distribution of Major Lineages in the Song Dynasty



Map 18: Distribution of Major Lineages, *jinshi* and *juren* in the Ming Dynasty

Archways within Ritual Alliance Boundaries shows which ritual alliances had received one or more archways in the Song or Ming dynasty. Together with the previous two maps, the distribution of commemorative archways shown here can be used to indicate a zone of relatively strong and orthodox “Confucian” cultural influence. Note that the northeast corner of the plain is once again fairly free of these material traces of scholar-literati culture. This regional cultural difference will be discussed further below.

One measure of the growing success of lineages in Putian was their ability to train scholar literati who went on to pass the imperial examinations and achieve an official position. In the 1,284 years from 620 to 1904, Putian produced 1,468 *jinshi* 進士 (Metropolitan Candidates). There were fifteen during the Tang, two during the Five Dynasties, 876 in the Song, 530 in the Ming, and seventy-one during the Qing. Peak years included twenty-three *jinshi* in 1100 and twenty-two in 1115, and nineteen in 1517 and twenty-one in 1522. Clark (2007: 214–32; and Appendix 1 and 2) has provided a detailed analysis of the examination successes of Song *jinshi* from Putian and Xianyou. Clearly this was a period of extraordinary achievements in Confucian and Neo-Confucian studies (see Clark: 2007, Chap. 6.213–54, *Literati Culture of the Mulan Valley*). Clark notes that some 60 percent of the *jinshi* (794 out of 1339 degrees) went to members of the top five surname groups (Chen, Fang, Huang, Lin and Zheng). He concludes that while some Song surname groups such as the Fang must have encouraged most of their sons to study for the examinations, other lineages employed strategies of diversification within different lineage segments, so that most *jinshi* are concentrated within specific lines of descent. Diversification into farming, commerce, and the trades made sense as the success rate in the exams dropped from around ten percent to much close to one percent over the Song dynasty.

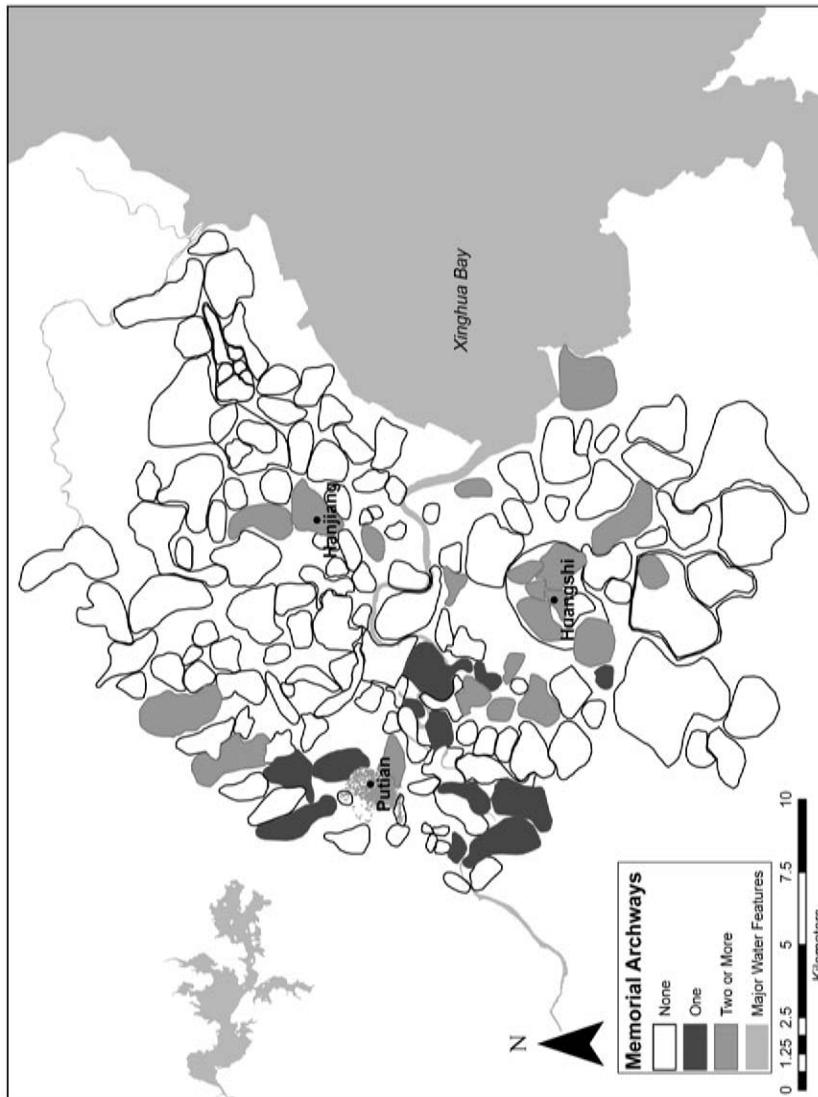
Literati from Putian were deeply involved in leading intellectual debates of the day. The Neo-Confucian master Lin Guangchao 林光朝 (Aixuan 艾軒) (1114–1178) spread the teachings of Cheng Yi in his Hongquangong Shuinan Shuyuan 紅泉宮水南書院 (Red Stream Temple Shuinan Academy) in Shuinan 水南 (Huangshi 黃石). His disciples continued his teachings. Putian Confucian scholars made a major impact on the elaboration of Neo-Confucian thought, as can be seen in the accounts of Putian scholars in the *Minzhong lixue yuanyuan kao* 閩中理學淵流考 (*Study of the original sources of the*

School of Principle within Fujian). At the same time that Master Lin Guangchao was running his academy, Zheng Qiao 鄭樵 (1104–1162), another Xinghua native son, was compiling his massive compendium, the *Tongzhi* 通志 encyclopedia. Zheng Qiao credits the scholars of the Putian region who allowed him to consult their extensive personal libraries.

During the Ming, Putian continued to produce an extraordinary number of examination graduates (*juren* and *jinshi*), far out of proportion to the size of the region. 494 official positions in the Ming bureaucracy were occupied by natives of Putian in the Ming. Parsons (1969:214) notes that at least one member of the Chen surname group held office from 1403 to 1644, with the exception of the Longqing period (1567–1572). The Lin surname groups of Putian were almost as successful, with at least one Lin member in office throughout the Ming (1403–1644) with the exception of the Qingtai and Tianshun periods (1450–1464). Both surname groups produced their greatest numbers of officials during the Jiajing period (1522–1566). The Huang of Putian also had at least one member in office in the Yongle (1403–1424) period and from the Chenghua through the Chongzhen periods (1465–1644), with the exception of the Longqing period (1567–72). They too had the most lineage members in office during the Jiajing period (1522–1566).

Ming sources such as the *Xu Puyang bishi* reveal that each of these large surname groups was divided into many different lines (*pai*). Thus for example the Lin living inside Putian City were divided into seven or eight distinct lines, located in different wards of the city, each of which produced between five to forty-six *jinshi*. Overall, some 425 *jinshi* are listed as having lived inside the walls of Putian City in the Ming, while 742 are listed as living in villages across the Putian plain and in other outlying regions of Putian. This gives some idea of the concentration of lineages, lineage halls, branch halls, Metropolitan Candidates, and retired officials within the city walls. At the same time, these figures show that there was a broad distribution of *jinshi* across the Putian plain, as shown in *Map 18: Distribution of Major Lineages, jinshi and juren in the Ming Dynasty*.

The Jiajing period was the high point of examination success for Putian lineages in the Ming. This period was however marred by Great Rites Controversy of 1524 (Fisher 1977). Emperor Shizong 世宗



Map 19: Memorial archways within Ritual Alliance boundaries

(r. 1521–67), who was not a direct successor to the throne, wished to proclaim his own father emperor, and offer him ancestral sacrifices in the Temple of Heaven. He was enraged when the majority of his court officials protested against his planned ritual reform. The executions, beatings, public humiliation and summary dismissal given to many of these officials may have led those from Putian to decide to focus more attention on local concerns. Many Putian court officials, who had opposed the ritual changes demanded by the Emperor, ended up in extended retirement in Putian. There they would come face to face with the pirate army invasions of the 1560s.

Temples and local cults

Many of these retired official and local literati became involved in debates about ritual reforms in the Putian area, as this was one of their areas of classical scholarly expertise. Some of these debates centered on reforms to ancestral worship, as mentioned above. Some had to do with the spreading influence of Wang Yangming's 王陽明 (1472–1529) alternative vision of a more populist, locally engaged Confucianism. Other more conservative scholars were concerned with the appropriateness of local popular changes to the sacrificial cults to local gods and the status of *shejitan* official altars dedicated to the soil and the harvest, as well as those to the spirits of the unrequited dead (*litan* 厲) that had established in each *li* sub-canton at the beginning of the Ming dynasty.

These altars had been intended to replace the vast range of temples to local gods, most of which were declared heterodox, and banned. An official *Register of State Sacrifices* was established, and different cult centers had to apply to enroll their gods onto this register. Inscription on the *Register* conferred new legitimacy on the cult center, and often came with new titles of enfeoffment or canonization for the god, and new imperial plaques for the temple. Officials from the local yamen were supposed to visit these temples and shrines and make offerings on the appropriate date each year, further enhancing the status of these sites in the eyes of the villagers (and the residents of neighboring villages). This system was a continuation of the canonization of local gods which had been systematized under the Song, but which can be traced back to early imperial times (Dean 1993, Hansen 1990).

Many of the gods and goddesses of the Putian plains had in fact received official canonization earlier during the Song dynasty.¹⁵ Some scholars have argued that the canonization of these deities was the principal mechanism for the achievement of recognition and acceptance of the Putian area by the imperial court, and vice versa the main means for local individuals and the local culture to identify with the Empire.¹⁶ Some of the inscriptions discussed by Zheng Zhenman in Part Two below show a clear awareness of the importance of state recognition and canonization of their village gods. At the same time, they suggest that the situation was much more complicated, and that canonization could only reach to a small number of the many cults of worship being practiced in the Putian plain. Moreover, some Song inscriptions, such as the *Xiangyingmiaoji*, note with resignation the continuation of Buddhist and Daoist rituals even within temples and cults officially canonized and potentially converted into more Confucian directions (Clark 2007:193).

The early Ming court was extremely grudging in its recognition of local cults.¹⁷ The founding emperor of the Ming, Zhu Yuanzhang,

¹⁵ These include close to twenty deities and temples listed in the *Qianlong Putian xianzhi*, all of whom received official titles through canonization during the Song dynasty.

¹⁶ Ke Dawei 科大衛 (David Faure) and Liu Zhiwei 家認同一明清華南地區宗族發展的意識形態基礎 (Lineage and the state identification of local society: the ideological foundations of the development of the lineage in Ming and Qing south China) *Lishi yanjiu 歷史研究*, 2000.3. pp. 3–14.

¹⁷ List of temples recorded in gazetteers of the Putian area show a sharp drop in the number of temples listed in the early Ming, followed by a slow increase into the mid Qing gazetteers. From 43 temples in the *Bamin tongzhi* (15th century), the number drops to only 10 temples in the (Hongzhi) *Xinghua fuzhi*, rises slightly to 11 temples in the (Wanli) *Putian Gazetteer*, 22 temples in the (Kangxi) *Tongzhi*, 25 temples in the (Qianlong) *Tongzhi*, 31 temples in the (Qianlong) *xianzhi*, and finally 36 temples in the (Daoguang) *tongzhi*. See Kojima Tsuyoshi 小島毅—1991. *Sishi to inshi: Fukkien no chihōshi ni okeru kijutsu to rinri*. [Orthodox and illicit cults: the principles underlying the record in local gazetteers of Fujian] 正祠と淫祠: 福建省の地方志にあける記述と論理. *Tōyō bunka kenkyūjo kiyō* 東洋文化研究紀要 114: 87–203. The majority of these gods are familiar figures from the imperial cult such as the altars to the soil and grain, the unrequited dead, the mountain and stream, and the city gods of Putian walled city, and the forts along the coast, along with Guandi 關帝, Tianfei 天妃 (later promoted to Tianhou 天后), the fire god, the Emperor of the Eastern Peak, Xuantian shangdi 玄天上帝, and the Dragon King. Local figures associated with irrigation fill out the official pantheon. They include Lady Qian, Li Zhangzhe and the Buddhist Monk Feng Taishi who assisted Li Zhangzhe in building the Mulan Weir, Wu Xing, who constructed the Yanshou Weir, and Pei Ciyan who dug the Guoqing reservoir. Other temples listed in the Qing gazetteers include over a dozen which had originally

desired to reshape popular worship. He severely restricted the official recognition of local cults, and forced many Buddhist monasteries to retract their extended networks of local Buddhist halls and temples. The centerpiece of his religious reform was the establishment of new *shéjitan* official altars of the soil and the grain and *litan* altars to the unrequited dead in every sub-canton of the empire. Imperial orders prescribed that the *shéjitan* altars should be open-air altars, on top of a mound of earth, marked with a tree. The gods should be represented by inscribed tablets, rather than by god statues. Representatives of each household or *jia* (ten households) should take part in the ritual sacrifices at the *shéjitan* and *litan* altars on regular occasions. The sacrifices would be followed by a Wine Drinking ceremony and the recitation of an “Oath to refrain from abusing the weak and powerless in the community” (Overmyer 1989–90).

This was the consciously archaic sacrificial system, based on descriptions in the classical ritual texts of antiquity, which the Emperor sought to impose on all the local communities of China. The *lîshè* system was part of a related but much broader set of reforms of the system of imperial administrative control, household registration, and taxation known as the *lijia* 里甲 system. This system of control was also based in the *li* sub-cantons, which rotated responsibility for tax payments between the members of each *jia*, who were also responsible for reporting on each other’s misdoings.

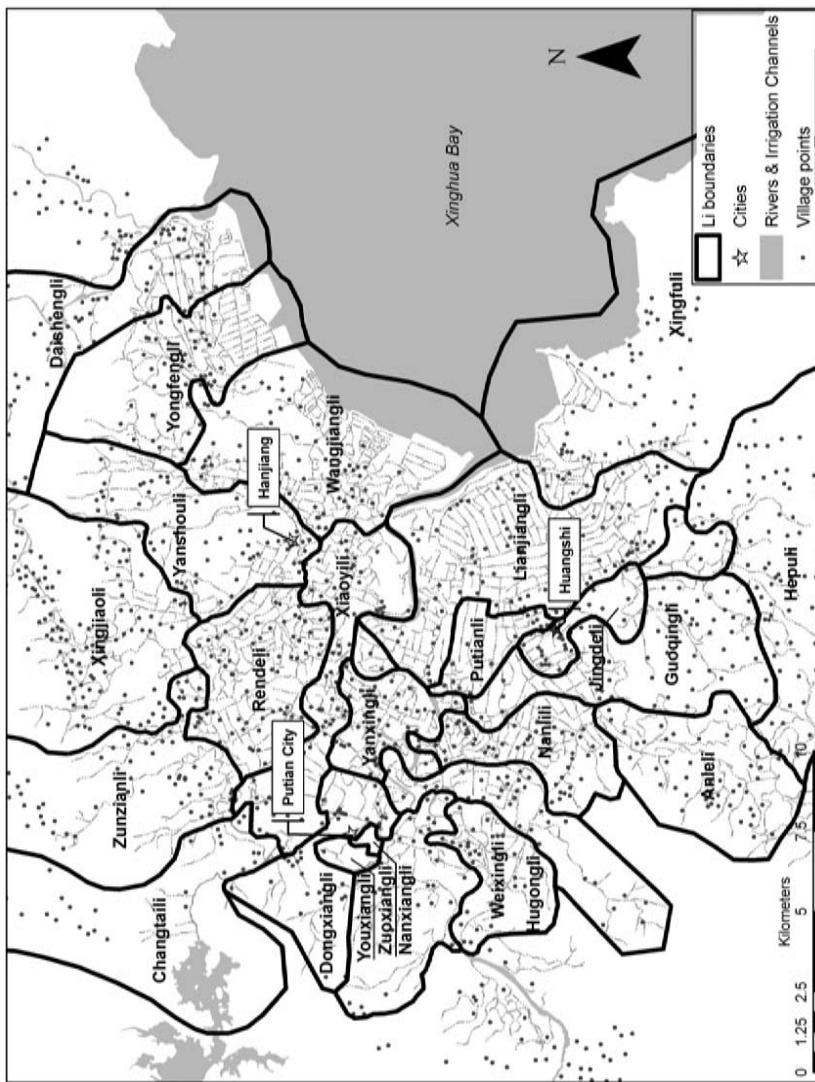
The Putian plain was divided into some twenty-two *li* sub-cantons, as shown in *Map 20: Li Sub-cantons on the Putian Plain*.¹⁸

The *li* sub-cantons of the Putian plains were divided in the early Ming into over 100 *tu* administrative units, which may have been the administrative spatial unit that was equipped with an official *shejitan* altar of the Soil and Harvest and a *litan* altar to the unrequited dead.¹⁹ The *Map Regional Ritual Alliances within Li sub-cantons of the*

received canonizations during the Song. It is interesting to note that in Zhang Qin’s 1945 draft *Putian xianzhi*, over 50 temples are introduced. Even so, the proportion of temples described in all these gazetteers is only a tiny fraction of the extant temples, as revealed by the fact that zealous administrators like Prefect Lei Yinglong could order the destruction of over 800 temples.

¹⁸ The village points on this and other maps show the current locations of villages. Many of these villages were established after the Song, in the Ming, and Qing dynasties (see the *Map of Village Foundation by Dynasty* in the Color Plates).

¹⁹ The boundaries of these *tu* units are difficult to reconstruct. See (*Hongzhi*) *Xinghua fuzhi* (弘治)興化府志, j. 9, *Huji: Litukao* 戶紀里圖考. Pp. 2–12, 2007:250–282, where the number of *tu* are listed, but no effort is made to connect them to the listed



Map 20: Li sub-cantons of the Putian plain



Map 21: Regional ritual alliances of the Putian plains

Putian Plain below reveals that very few ritual alliance boundaries are cut by *li* sub-canton boundaries. In other words, most ritual alliances developed within the boundaries of the *li sub-cantons*, and perhaps originated in the *tu* subdivisions of the *li sub-cantons*. This could be interpreted as a straightforward top-down process of a transfer of symbolic powers and ritual-administrative spaces from the state sacrificial system to a system of local temples. However, there was clear resistance to this process expressed by local Putian literati and by many officials in office. They seem to have sensed that this mutation of an official set of altars and rituals into a local form of ritual alliance, with its own rituals and deities, marked a major challenge to the presumed continuum of power of the imperial ritual order, and pointed to the rise of an alternative power formation rooted in the local temple alliances with their own sources of supernatural power. The most immediately egregious problems, from the point of view of the Confucian defenders of classical orthodoxy, were the anthropomorphic representations of the gods of the soil and the harvest, and the merging of the cults to these gods with cults to all kinds of unsanctified local deities, all on the same altar or in the same temple.

Historical sources indicate that about fifty years after the establishment of the Ming empire, the system of official altars began to mutate into a network of local temples dedicated to local gods, incorporating an altar to the gods of the soil and the grain (*Chongkan Xinghua fuzhi*, 2006: 661).²⁰ A few of the ancestral *shê* altars of the 153 ritual alliances currently active in the Putian plain can be traced back to early official Ming *shê* altars. These include Huangxiang village near Hanjiang, one of the early centers of the Huang lineage. Others include Qianwang village near Jiangkou (called Qianhuang in the Ming and Qing sources), Shangyu village (now Daomei village) near Huangshi town on the southern irrigated plain, and the Longpo zushê near the north

villages. In the (Qianlong) *Putian xianzhi*, in the *Litu* section of the discussion of *Yudi* (Territory) in juan 1: 6b-21a, 1968:43-50, the numbers of *tu* are everywhere listed as declining, but again no effort is made to link the listed villages to specific *tu* administrative regions.

²⁰ Based on stone inscriptions and other historical sources from Putian, we had hypothesized (Zheng 1995, Dean 1998b) that the regional ritual alliances referred to locally as *qijing* might have originated in a mutation of the early Ming state imposed, official *lishê* into a local network of associated *shê* temples or *shêmiao* 社廟 (temples to local gods with altars to one or more *shê* (*Mingzhu zunwang* and his wife) on the side altars).

gate of Putian city.²¹ In most of these cases, our survey located the ancestral *shê* altar, and found evidence of the subsequent branching out of subsidiary *shê* altars into nearby villages, and the formation through this process of ritual alliances (Dean, 1998b).

Most commonly these new ritual centers housed anthropomorphic representations of the gods of the soil and the grain, called Zunzhu Mingwang 尊主明王 the Revered Lord, Brilliant King, and his wife, Houtu furen 后土夫人, the Lady of Houtu. Various zealous Confucian administrators and local fundamentalist Confucians fought back against these tendencies. Many local temples were torn down by these Confucian purists, but to little avail. Localities continued to merge *shêji* altars with their temples dedicated to local gods. In many cases, the original *shê* altar would become the ancestral *shê*, the *gushê* 古社. Branch temples would form in allied communities, forming *dongxi nanbei shê* 東西南北社 (eastern, western, northern and southern *shê*), in a cluster formation around the original founding temple. By adding additional temples above and below the cluster the alliance became a seven-fold ritual alliance, known locally as a *qijing*. Each village with its own *shê* altar and temple (often in one and same building), was an independent member of the ritual alliance, and able to participate in the processions and rituals of the alliance as an equal member. Villages without their own *shê* were forced to link up with villages that had a *shê* altar in order to participate. This in turn led to pressures to create new *shê* altars for villages that sought to demonstrate their own ritual independence. The *shémiao* temple system has remained central to the ritual alliances and ritual activities of the villages of the Putian plain to this day.

These mutations did not go unnoticed by local champions of Confucian orthodoxy. In the early Chenghua period (1465–1487), Peng Shao 彭韶 stated in his “Letter to Prefect Lord (Zheng) Yue 與郡守岳公書” that:

Putian was originally a land of barbarians, and its excessive shrines are especially numerous. Even though powerful and outstanding leaders emerge regularly, even they are unable to reform (these cults). The gods that are worshipped are beyond categorization or comprehension. The leaders of the mean and humble, point out each month the birthdays

²¹ (*Chongkan [Hongzhi] Xinghua fuzhi*, (2007):661; (*Qianlong Putian xianzhi*, j. 3, 28b (1968):128).

of the gods, and collect money to sacrifice to them: at these times they transmit statements about disaster and good fortune in order to frighten the villagers, and many (political) rumors are spread in this way. At this moment the Confucian scholar Lin Bangjun who abhorred excessive cults requested to take control over them and went around to all regions and whenever he encountered the site of an excessive cult, he ordered that it be demolished. In standing temples, he established the two altars of the village *shè* and village *li*, in accordance with the Hongwu ritual regulations. He caused the village elders to lead their community residents to conduct sacrifices at the appropriate seasons, and so there would be enough to sacrifice to the gods of the earth and grain, and the (unrequited dead of the *litan*) would not be hungry like ghosts with no descendants.²²

Peng Shao obtained his *jinshi* degree in 1457, and served as Minister of Punishments, and later retired to his home village. This letter was no doubt written to encourage the District Magistrate Yue Zheng 岳正 to carry out a policy of “local regulation of customs”. Yue Zheng (1420–1474) became Putian District Magistrate in 1465 and left office after five years. According to the (Qianlong) *Putian xianzhi*, during his tenure Yue Zheng built the Hanjiang Academy and the Confucian Temple, and also demolished excessive shrines.²³ Clearly, he adopted Peng Shao’s call for the destruction of licentious, excessive shrines, but the actual effects of his policies are unknown. In the Zhengde period (1506–1521) the Putian District Magistrate Lei Yinglong 雷應龍, with the backing of the scholar-literati elite, “strenuously destroyed excessive shrines” 力毀淫祠.²⁴ During his six years in office, Lei Yinglong is said to have “destroyed 800 temples dedicated to unacceptable demons, and only to have sacrificed to the Master of Letters (Zhu Xi), and the various sages, in order to make solemn the Way of Transformation” 毀非鬼之祠八百區, 專祀文公, 諸賢, 以隆道化.²⁵ Even so, some popular god temples were able to transform themselves in order to escape destruction. By the mid-Ming period, the activities of the

²² The final line includes the line “the ghosts of the (Ruo) Ao family”, an allusion to the eradication of the house of Ruo Ao in the *Zuozhuan*, Duke Xuan, 4th year. Cited from Peng Shao 明彭韶, *Peng Huian ji* 彭惠安集, j. 8, pp. 3b–4a. This important passage is repeated and further explicated in Zheng Zhenman’s essay in Part Two below, where the Chinese text can be found.

²³ (Qianlong) *Putian xianzhi* (乾隆)莆田縣志, j.8; pp.10b–11a. (1968 ed), pp. 258–9.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, j. 8:24a–25a, (1968 ed.), pp. 265–6.

²⁵ Fang Liangyong 方良永, *Fang Jiansu wenji* 方簡肅文集, j. 5 “Yihou Lei Juexuan chusi beiji 邑侯雷覺軒去思碑記, pp. 15a–17a.

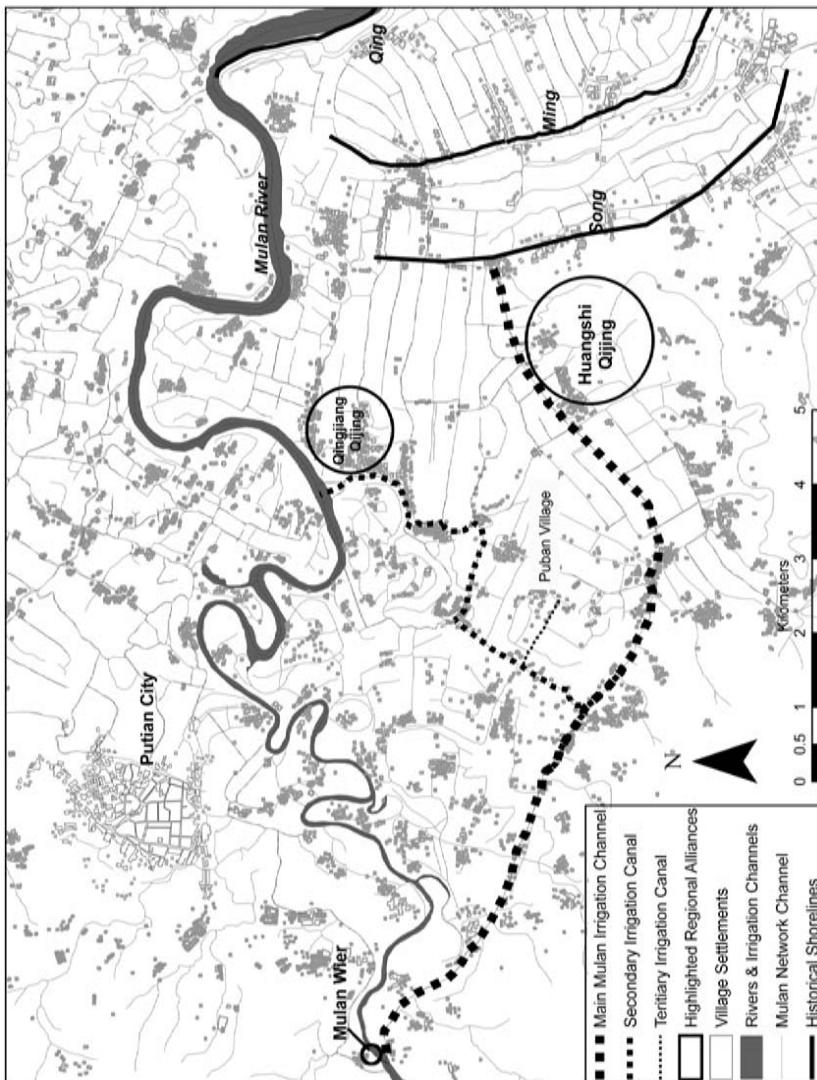
Putian popular god temples gradually recovered, and the officials were no longer in a position to carry out campaigns of destruction of illicit temples. What is especially noteworthy is that in the late Ming, the Putian scholar literati actively participated in the repair and construction of popular god temples.

Subsequent fieldwork revealed that many village communities usurped the right to establish, move, and/or sub-divide *shê* altars long after the early to mid-Ming. By that time, the imperial court and the local yamen had given up trying to restrict popular worship to a restricted set of official *shêjitan* 社稷壇 altars. We also found many instances of a *shê* being divided due to internal conflicts from population pressure, struggles over the control of geomantic sites, growing class differentiation, and other factors. Nevertheless, the *shê* continued to serve as a key marker of ritual territory and local identity.

Irrigation and rise of the ritual alliances (qijing)

Closer investigation of the evolution of the irrigation system also suggested additional reasons for the formation of local alliances. Many of the ritual alliances can be analyzed in relation to their contiguous position along a stretch of an irrigation canal, or in relation to a shared sluice gate or dike. As we looked more closely into the history of the irrigation system, marking the points of conflict that emerge in the written record (irrigation gazetteers, stone inscriptions, literati writings), we noticed a striking proximity between one of the flashpoints in the history of the irrigation system and the rise of the first recorded ritual alliances around the year 1500. Such a point is the digging of a tertiary irrigation canal into Puban 蒲阪 village which caused a marked slowing of the water flow in the main canal that flowed south-east from the Mulan Weir to the market town of Huangshi, a center of major lineages and literati-officials, and in the secondary canal which flowed north from about midway down the main canal to the Qingjiang region near the Mulan river, another center of literati-officials. We surmise, based on a reading of the protests lodged by scholar literati elites of both regions, that they were unable to resolve the problem through relying on their access to the state (i.e., their ability to speak directly to the district magistrate).²⁶ What appears to have happened

²⁶ Sources on conflicts within the irrigation systems include Dean and Zheng, *Epi-graphical Materials*, 1995: No. 130, pp. 152–3; *Chongkan Xinghua Fuzhi*, 2007 ed.:



Map 22: An interesting intersection of irrigation canals on the Putian plain

instead is that local leaders of both regions established the two first regional ritual alliances, each made up of seven villages, in the historical record. By mobilizing the local population through ritual means, the local elites may have found a way to take control over the maintenance of the irrigation system in a situation where compromise and mutual assistance was imposed by the environmental limits of the irrigation system. If so, this would indicate a major change from earlier lineage based management of the irrigation system to a new system of temple based multi-lineage patterns of control and maintenance of the irrigation system.

Due to the intricate nature of the overall irrigation system, particular stretches of the system could be drastically affected by interventions elsewhere, upstream in the system. The first recorded *qijing* sevenfold alliances to appear on the Putian plain may well have formed in response to just such problems. These were the ritual alliances of Huangshi and Qingjiang, each made up of seven villages, mentioned in the (*Hongzhi*) *Chongkan Xinghua fuzhi* of 1503 (2007:274). These new ritual alliances represented different coalitions of lineages. The Huangshi lineages claimed descent from the Fourteen Surnames who had assisted in the digging (and the subsequent maintenance) of the main channel of the Mulan irrigation system back in 1083.²⁷ The Qingjiang lineages (primarily the Zhou 周 and the Zheng 鄭) were more recently prominent groups of gentry-literati, several of whom had passed the imperial examinations and risen to high official positions in the Ming dynasty. These two groups fought over changes to the ritual order at the temples situated at the head of the Mulan Weir that took place in the early decades of the 16th century. During this time, they would also be drawn into conflict by concrete interventions to the irrigation system.

The construction of the Mulan Weir and the digging of its main irrigation canals and channels, had been essential to the reclaiming of the southern irrigated plain from the sea, and thus to the settlement of the entire irrigated plain. To review the history of the Mulan irrigation system, in 1064, Lady Qian attempted to build a weir (a breakwater dam across a stream designed to separate rising tidal sea water from

252.; Chen Maolie *Putian shuilizhi*, 1974:149–52; 168, 178–82, 188, 202–03, 231–2, 240, 245–67, 253, 322–9, 532, 669–80.

²⁷ The Fourteen Surname (Groups) include three Yu 余 surname groups, seven Zhu 朱 surname groups, and one each of the Lin 林, Chen 陳 and Gu 顧 surnames.

the downstream flow of fresh water, and to divert the latter into channels for irrigation purposes) across the Lai river upstream of the current Mulan weir. Just as she was celebrating the success of the weir by holding a party on top of it, the force of the water collapsed the dam, and she was swept away and drowned. A local official named Li Zhen 黎畛 also died in this accident. Legend has it that Lady Qian's corpse floated upstream past a group of thirteen villages which subsequently built temples in her honor.

In 1070, a *jinshi* named Lin Congshi 林從世 attempted to build another weir further downstream, but this dam also collapsed. Finally, in 1075, a man named Li Hong 李宏 from Fuqing to the north, perhaps responding to the call of Wang Anshi 王安石 (1021–1086) for major infrastructural projects, raised 70,000 cash and enlisted the support of the so-called Fourteen Surnames, kin-groups living along the path of the projected irrigation canal, to donate land and labor for the building of the Mulan weir. The weir was completed in 1083. Li Hong was aided in his selection of the site by a mysterious monk named Master Feng Zhiri 馮智日, who gave him a magical box to toss into the river to indicate the correct spot to build the weir. This legend is first given in a stele record by the Xinghua polymath Zheng Qiao.

The ten kilometer canal Li Hong had dug reached just past Huangshi town to the Dayu 大嶼 hill at the (then) seaside, and allowed for over 10,000 *mu* (1600 acres) to be irrigated. Several earlier irrigation reservoirs established in the Tang were drained and the land within them was dedicated to the descendants of Li Hong (and in some versions, to the descendants of the Fourteen Surnames as well). A number of Li Hong's relatives (he had no sons) became monks in monasteries in the area, or took charge of sacrificial lands and ritual functions. Other properties were bequeathed to an Irrigation Maintenance Office, established in 1119, to manage the canals. Various sacrificial lands and weir maintenance lands were preserved to cover the expenses of rituals at the temples built in honor of Li Hong and Lady Qian at the Mulan Weir. Over 100 *mu* 畝 of land (sixteen acres) was set aside for Li Hong's temple. The descendants of the "Fourteen Surnames" claimed that over 300 *mu* 畝 of land (fifty acres) was given tax-free to their ancestors for assisting Li Hong in the digging of the main irrigation canal.

The temple built at the Mulan weir initially housed Li Hong, Lady Qian, and the spirit tablets of the Fourteen Surnames. The temple applied for and received an imperial plaque and titles of enfeoffment

for Marquis Li Hong and Lady Qian in the Song dynasty. In 1262, Li Hong was enfeoffed as Huiji hou (Marquis of Humane Salvation). Other changes to the temple complex arose from local interventions. Even earlier, in the Shaoding period (1228–33), 140 mu of tax-exempt sacrificial land had been approved to cover the costs of ritual sacrifices for his cult. Liu Kezhuang (1187–1269), a retired Putian official and voluminous commentator on Song local society, wrote an inscription which called for the separate worship of Li Hong and Lady Qian (who was moved to a back hall) on grounds of propriety.²⁸ The Fourteen Surnames ancestral tablets were set to Li Hong's right hand side. In 1327, under the Yuan dynasty, the Board of Rites approved special individual rites for Li Hong in his own temple on the right side of the Mulan Weir.

The Mulan irrigation system continued to develop rapidly, with additional channels, secondary canals, and tertiary irrigation conduits added at a rapid rate. Nowadays, the southern irrigated plain is made up of seven major channels, twenty-four secondary canals, and 109 irrigation conduits. In 1315 a major change was made at the head of the system by diverting 30 percent of the water into a channel flowing north around Putian city, and linking up with three earlier, smaller-scale irrigation systems within the northern plain.

The early Ming presented a grave challenge to the legitimacy of the cults of the Mulan system, as Ming Taizu was determined to reign in popular cult worship. The descendants of Li Hong and the Fourteen Surnames were able to persuade the court to uphold the official rites for Li Hong, Lady Qian and the Fourteen Surnames' ancestors, and to continue to honor the tax-free status of the lands dedicated to the sacrifices at the temple and the maintenance of the irrigation system. In the first year of the Ming dynasty, 1368, these rites, honors and tax exemptions were approved once again by the Board of Rites. The temple was rebuilt, and the gods were shifted around again. This time Li Hong and Li Zhen were worshipped in an eastern hall. The front hall housed Lin Jinshi and the Fourteen Ancestors. Lady Qian was worshipped as before in the back hall.

In 1511 a temple keeper named Li Xiong 李熊, who claimed to be a descendant of Li Hong, tore down the original temple to Lady Qian and the ancestors of the Fourteen Surnames. Next he moved the icon

²⁸ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995, No. 47, pp. 52–54.

of Lady Qian to a smaller side temple behind the main temple dedicated to Li Hong, and then destroyed the spirit tablets of the Fourteen Surnames. Li Xiong dared to take these actions because he had allied himself with newly emergent Zhou 周 and Zheng 鄭 gentry families who lived in the Qingjiang 清江 area near the banks of the Mulan river, in a recently reclaimed region of the Southern plain, watered by a perpendicular secondary canal that joins the main irrigation channel halfway down near Quqiao (see *Map 27: Interesting Intersection of Irrigations Canals on the Southern Putian Plain* above). Li Xiong asked Zheng Yue 鄭岳, a prominent retired scholar-official from Puban village near Qingjiang, to compose a *Mulan Beiji* 木蘭陂集 *Collection (of sources) on the Mulan Weir* to support his claims to the temple complex and its sacrificial estate.²⁹ He may also have persuaded Zhou Ying 周瑛, a local official and co-editor of the (*Hongzhi*) *Chongkan Xinghua Fuzhi* gazetteer, to downplay the significance of the contribution of the Fourteen Surnames to the building of the Mulan Weir and its main irrigation channel. In this gazetteer completed in 1503, in the midst of a campaign against heterodox cults (*yinsi* 淫祀), Zhou Ying supported the cult of Li Hong and Lady Qian, but claimed that the 70,000 strings of cash used for the construction of the Weir was probably Li Hong's own money, and that those who aided him were probably simply forced into providing corvée labor for the project.³⁰ The only specific mention he makes of the Fourteen Surnames implies that they were the heads of wealthy families that had benefitted from the Mulan irrigation system who were therefore made responsible for the regular maintenance of the Weir and the main irrigation channels.³¹ This appears to be part of a pattern, as a memorial to the court from Censor Zhou Jinlong 周進隆 requesting renewed official sacrifices for Li Hong, and grudgingly allowing for continued sacrifices for Lady Qian, Li Zhen, and Li Congshi (but with no mention of the ancestors of the Fourteen Surnames) was accepted in 1497 by the Ministry of Rites in Beijing. This memorial, as well as Zhou Ying's remarks in the *Xinghua Fuzhi*, all draw attention to the illicit seizure of sacrificial lands by unnamed "local people" in the area, and the need to reclaim

²⁹ We have not been able to locate this source. Some prefaces and essays are cited in Chen Maolie, *Putian shuilizhi* (1974 reprint). This version is based on the account in juan 2 of the *Mulan bizhi* (mss. copy of 1762 edition).

³⁰ (*Hongwu*) *Chongkan Xinghua xianzhi*, *Gongji 2: Shuili shangjuan* (2007): 1352–1355.

³¹ (*Hongwu*) *Chongkan Xinghua xianzhi*, *Liji 30*: (2007): 1140.

these properties for the descendants of Li Hong.³² A case was being laid for Li Xiong actions.

The acts of Li Xiong provoked a crisis of legitimacy in the symbolic order undergirding the irrigation system. The descendants of the Fourteen Surnames, who lived primarily in the Huangshi area at the far end of the Song period irrigation channel dug by Li Hong, were aghast at the dishonor done to their ancestors, and to the loss of several hundred *mu* of sacrificial lands and tax free status. They struck back by compiling the *Mulanbeizhi* 木蘭陂志 (*Account of the Mulan Weir*).³³ Their representatives, including one Chen Benqing 陳本清, submitted a legal brief in 1519 against Li Xiong, accusing him of twelve crimes, including forging his ancestral link to Li Hong, destroying stelae inscribed with accounts of the deeds of the Fourteen Surnames, tearing down the temple to Lady Qian in order to build his own house with the timber, and printing willfully distorting historical records.

They also claimed that Li Xiong had maliciously destroyed an imperial plaque that had been displayed at the temple to Lady Qian and the Fourteen Ancestors bearing the words “Imperially Enfeoffed Virtuous Ministers”. Moreover, they charged that some of the earliest inscriptions relating to the cult of the founders of the Mulan Weir irrigation system, had been deliberately altered by Li Xiong in order to deny the importance of the role of the Fourteen Surnames.³⁴ They stated that Zheng Qiao’s original phrase, “Li Hong then recruited the Fourteen Great Surnames to provide him with 70,000 strings of cash”, had been excised from the printed text of the lost stele (in Zheng Yue’s *Collection on the Mulan Weir*). Similarly, Liu Kezhuang’s comment that “(d)uring the Yuanyou reign (1086–1093), at the request of Magistrate Jun … the Eryimiao was built to offer sacrifices to Qian, Li, Lin and the Fourteen Surnames”, had also been deliberately cut out of the version that went into the *Xinghua fuzhi*. As neither of the original stelae have survived, the issue of altered versions of their edited texts

³² Zhou Jinlong, *Ming qing sidian zoushu* 明請祀典奏疏 (*Ming dynasty Memorial requesting Official Sacrifices*), in Chen Maolie, *Putian shuivilizhi*, j. 8, 23b–28a (1974): pp. 754–763.

³³ The edition of the *Mulan beizhi* we have consulted was completed and re-edited by Zhu Zhenxian 朱振先 in 1732.

³⁴ These inscriptions include the *Chongxiu Mulanbei ji* 重修木蘭陂集 (*Record of the Repairs to the Mulan Weir*) by Zheng Qiao and the *Xieying Li Zhangzhe miaoji* 協應李長者廟記 (*Record of the Temple of the Harmonious and Responsive Lord Li*) by Liu Kezhuang. See Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 47, pp. 52–54. The text is also found in *Chongkan Xinghua fuzhi*, *Liji* 15, *Yiwenzhi* 4 (2007):769–771.

raises significant problems about the use of the inscriptional sources for historical research.³⁵

In the initial legal altercation, local authorities ruled in favor of the descendants of the Fourteen Surnames, but Li Xiong's father Li Chongxiao 李崇孝 submitted a memorial to the Ministry of Rites in Beijing, and an Imperial Censor was dispatched to mediate the dispute. The final judgment, rendered in 1521, was in large measure a vindication for Li Xiong. The court determined that although he was not a direct descendant of Li Hong, his acts of reverence towards the founder of the irrigation system entitled him to maintain control over the temple, and a good portion of the sacrificial lands connected to it.

The descendants of the Fourteen Surnames were left to lick their wounds. In 1553 they managed to rebuild a temple to house the ancestral tablets of the Fourteen Surnames behind the new Lady Qian temple. The case did not stop there however, for they claimed that a son of Li Xiong took advantage of the pirate invasions of the Jiajing period (1522–1566) to burn down the rebuilt temple, causing them to have to rebuild it a third time in 1594. The entire case lingered on until the mid-Qing, when it was brought forward by later descendants of the Fourteen Surnames yet again with the publication of the *Mulan beizhi* in 1732, in an effort to right the record in advance of what would become the Qianlong edition of the *Putian xianzhi* gazetteer.³⁶ The situation became so difficult for editors of regional gazetteers that the last of these, the final *jinshi* from Putian, Zhang Qin 張琴, stated that he would simply repeat the words of (both sides) in the debate in his section on the history of irrigation in Putian, “not daring to change a

³⁵ This phrase is missing from the received text. Of course, stelae can be altered by recarving of text as well. Textual copies of stelae in the absence of rubbings are frequently altered or abbreviated in regional gazetteers, as stated explicitly by the editor of the *Ninghua xianzhi* (1989:7), who explained that he “improved” the texts of local inscriptions before including them in his gazetteer. Gazetteers also rarely include lists of contributors along with the text of the inscription.

³⁶ The compilers of the *Mulan beizhi* also included early land contracts, and lists of sacrificial land holdings, proving their claims to these properties. The concluded with the texts of later stone inscriptions from the Ming and Qing, supporting their claims. These are the 1553 *Chongxiu Shisijia zumiaojì* 重修十四家祖廟記 (*Record of the reconstruction of the ancestral temple of the Fourteen Surnames*) and the 1650 *Chongxiu Qianfei ji shisi zumiao beiji* 重修錢妃及十四祖廟碑記 (*Stele record of the repairs to the Ancestral Temple of the Fourteen (Surnames) and Lady Qian*). See Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, No. 164. pp. 186–187.

single word” in his Republican period edition of the *Putian xianzhi*.³⁷ Chen Chiyang concluded that the relations between the Li lineage (and by extension, their allies the Zhou and the Zheng of Qingjiang) on the one hand, and the descendants of the Fourteen Surnames on the other hand, “were like fire and water” (*Putian shuilizhi*, juan 5, 22b, 1974:426).

Underlying the struggle over the symbolic control of the temple was a fundamental conflict within the irrigation system. Recall that the backers of Li Xiong were based in Qingjiang, near the Mulan river, at the end of a major fork in the original channel dug by Li Hong. This area was reclaimed from the sea and settled primarily in the early Ming. The descendants of the Fourteen Surnames lived closer to the original main channel of the Mulan Weir irrigation system in and around Huangshi town. There was already considerable tension between these two groups over water rights as the area to the north of Qingjiang along the Mulan river was being reclaimed in the early Ming, while at the same time the even larger newly reclaimed area to the east of Huangshi was being opened up for cultivation and new village settlements all the way into the late Ming.³⁸

Proof of the intricacy and fragility of the irrigation system can be seen in the episode that took place right in between the two first *qijing* ritual alliances, around the year 1525. At that time, a new tertiary canal leading to Puban village was dug at the instigation of Zheng Yue 鄭岳, a Gentleman in Waiting in the Ministry of War, who had retired and was living in Puban village.³⁹ This is the same individual who had helped Li Xiong by compiling the *Mulan biji* (*Collected sources on the Mulan Weir*) a decade earlier. This canal diverted yet more water from the Mulan Weir toward the Qingjiang region, away from the

³⁷ Chen Chiyang, the compiler of the *Putian shuilizhi*, raises many questions about the authenticity of the claims of the descendants of the Fourteen Surnames (*Putian shuilizhi*, j. 5, 17a–22b (1974): 425–430. Most of the ancestors they worshipped in the temple at the head of the Mulan Weir were in fact not from Li Hong’s time. The actual status of the Fourteen Surnames at the time of the construction of the Weir merits further investigation.

³⁸ The majority of the disputes over water rights included in Chen Maolie (Chen Chiyang) 1828 *Putian shuilizhi* involve the region called ZengZouXu, now known as Dongyang, at the eastern end point of the Mulan Weir, beyond the town of Huangshi, see footnote 15 above.

³⁹ Zheng Yue, *Puban xingzao bei* 蒲坂興造碑 [Stele on the construction (of an irrigation canal, a bridge and a Buddhist monastery) in Puban], Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*. 1995: No. 130, pp. 152–3.

Huangshi region at the end of the main irrigation canal (See *Map 27: Interesting Intersection of Irrigation Canals on the Southern Putian Plain* above). The Puban irrigation conduit takes water from a secondary irrigation channel which is perpendicular to the main irrigation canal. This secondary channel links with the main canal near Quqiao, about halfway down the canal to the Huangshi area. Paradoxically, this diversion of even more water flow to the north (and then off to the east towards Puban village) eventually led to severe water shortages in many villages to the north in the Xindu and Qingjiang area, as well as in villages near Shaban and Huangshi town.⁴⁰

Both of these areas had strong scholar-literati gentry lineages, one dating back to the Song, and the other to the Ming. These groups attempted to call on the local government (the district magistrate and the provincial governor's office) to resolve the issue, but the complexity of the problem now exceeded the ability of the government to intervene on a case by case basis. Although in this particular case a district magistrate did eventually (in Wanli 34, or 1604) establish a system for the distribution of water at the secondary canal (separating and fixing the proportion of water that should flow north (30%) along the perpendicular secondary canal and southeast along the main channel (70%), this action was too little too late.⁴¹ This is but one example of the long-term unanticipated effects of adding just one more irrigation canal to an already intricately inter-connected system, leading to

⁴⁰ Dredging of the irrigation canals and channels is said by Chen Chiyang to have first taken place during the Hongzhi period (1488–1505) (*Putian shuilizhi*, 1974: 151). Zheng Yue also makes several observations on the reasons for the overall crisis of the irrigation system in his *Mulanbeiji* (Collection on the Mulan Weir). These include the silting in of canals, resulting in their becoming more and more shallow. Moreover, illicit digging of openings into the irrigation channels had become more widespread, so that if there was little rainfall, certain channels would run dry. Worse still, sand and mud had silted up the Mulan Weir itself, allowing seawater to spill over into the irrigation channel and then into the fields, destroying crops, and further silting up the irrigation system. Finally, the deforestation of mountains like Mt. Hu had led to major runoffs of topsoil which further clogged the irrigation canals (Chen, *op. cit.* 151) Zhou Ying also discussed instances of irrigation canals running dry due to excessive demands on the systems from newly reclaimed lands, or due to breaches in the dikes (*Cuiqu zhaigao* 翠渠摘稿, j. 2, 31b–33b).

⁴¹ Putian District Magistrate Cai Shanji 蔡善繼 issued a proclamation determining the dimensions of the sluice gates in channels that divide near Quqiao, with one going north towards Xindu (and Qingjiang) and the other continuing south to Shaban (and onwards to Huangshi). The Xinghua Prefect Wang Jiazhong 王嘉忠 forbade the villagers of Shaban from blocking the secondary channel carrying water to the north. Chen Chiyang, *Putian shuilizhi*, 1974: 149–50.

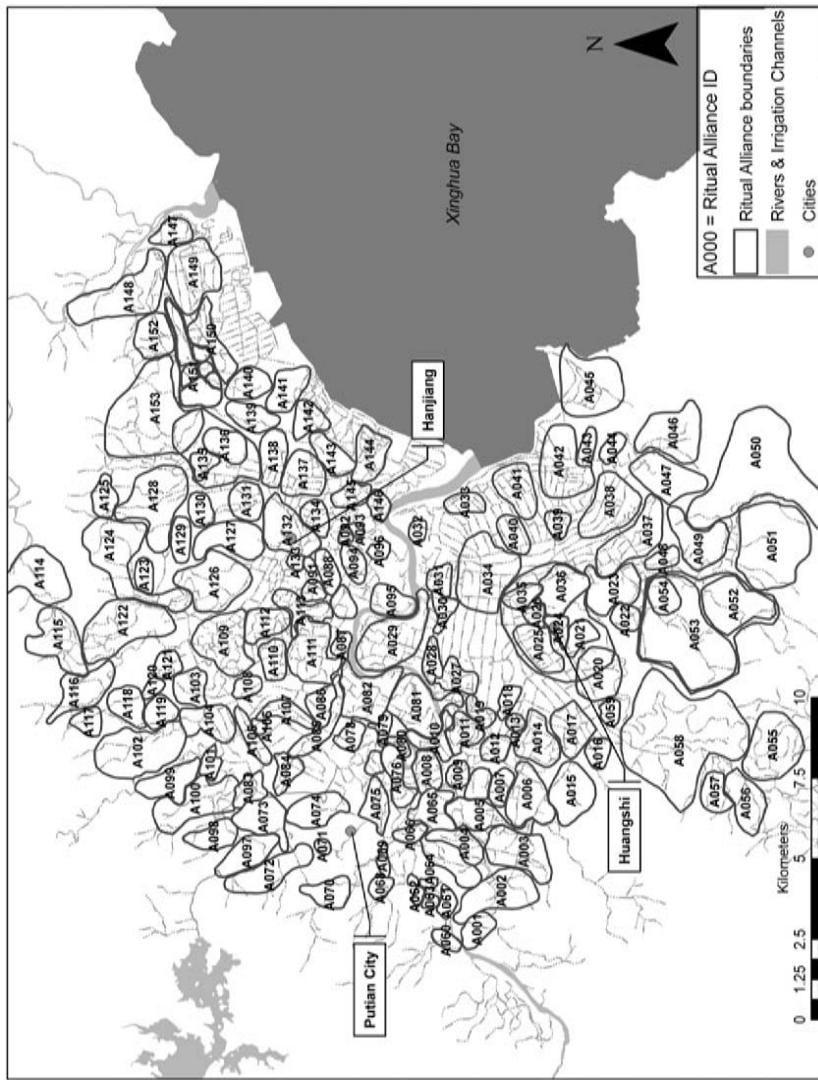
shortages of water in several sectors of the irrigation system. In this case, the ritual alliances of the Qingjiang area and those of Huangshi region were both affected and both would have remonstrated to the district magistrate. Thus despite their arguments over the ritual order of the temples at the head of the Mulan Weir irrigation system, these ritual alliances were forced to compromise with one another to some degree in this case because of their shared dependence on the irrigation system.

The alliances between powerful lineages appear to have begun to mutate over the 16th century into broader temple alliances. These alliances could mobilize local populations more effectively for the joint, cooperative (by necessity) management of the irrigation system. New forms of ritual, including multi-alliance processions around higher order temples, developed at this point to attempt to better integrate and manage entire swaths of the irrigation system. Ritual alliances gradually extended over the entire irrigated alluvial plain. By the 1730's, even villages outside the immediate irrigation system, such as those along the foothills of the Hugong mountains to the south of the irrigated plain, were forming their own alliances, as seen in steiae recording the involvement of a thirty-six village alliance with four spirit worshipping societies based in the Lingyundai temple atop the volcanic cone of Mt. Hu (see Dean and Zheng, 1995: No. 216, p. 251, *Chongxiu Lingyundai juanzi juantianbei* 重修凌雲殿捐資捐田碑 (Stele on the contributions of land and money for the restoration of the Temple that Surpasses the Clouds).

As one region gathered into a ritual alliance, other regions nearby would do the same. The process continued into the late 19th century, when for example in 1896 the Linshangong near Fengting in Xianyou was established as an alliance of thirty-six independent villages. A side altar in the temple is dedicated to the eighteen young men who died in battles to defend the alliance from a neighboring cluster of Zhu single surname villages that had historically controlled water supplies to the region of the thirty-six villages and kept most of the villagers as their tenant farmers.

Currently there are 153 regional ritual alliances across the Putian plain (see Map 23).

Within the regional ritual alliances, higher order alliances gradually developed, linking together several alliances around a common temple. *Map 24: Higher Order Ritual Alliances on the Putian Plain*



Map 23: Regional ritual alliances on the Putian plain

(below) shows the distribution of these larger collective alliances, each of which is marked by a massive procession of all the participating alliances and their villages. These higher order alliances and their central temples, processions and rituals, are described in detail in the *Survey*. The common temples of these higher order alliances served as regional centers for the maintenance of the local networks of the irrigation systems.

One example of this kind of irrigation management committee can be seen in the northeast corner of the Putian plain, in the Jiuliyang irrigation system. The Nanan weir (or Jiuliyang) irrigation system begins at an opening on the south side of the Qiulu river into which water is diverted just above the weir (which is a low lying partial dam across the river). The water runs along a long stone canal which runs eastwards just alongside the Qiulu river, and then divides off into three perpendicular canals running southwards across the plain. The furthest west, and closest to the mountains, of these south flowing canals irrigates the area known as Dingyang 頂洋 (Upper Paddy fields), the second crosses the Neidai 內埭 (Inner Dikelands), and the third runs in front of the Waidai 外埭 (Outer Dikelands). Each strip of land was developed in a different era—the Dingyang band that runs along the base of the mountains was irrigated in the Northern Song, while the Neidai was settled in the Southern Song as land was reclaimed from the sea, and the Waidai was reclaimed, irrigated and settled up to the end of the Ming.

The Jiuliyang irrigation system flows across the three *Li* sub-cantons of Daishengli 待聖里, Yongfengli 永豐里, and Wangjiangli 望江里. The area was further subdivided administratively into fifteen *Jia* (household registration units). It is difficult to know how many *lîshêtan* and *litan* were set up in this region. Only Qianwang village in the Fengmei ritual alliance is identified in early sources as having had an official *lîshêtan*. Some villages that belonged to the same *li* sub-canton drew water from different irrigation canals, and may therefore have formed alliances based on these “natural irrigation communities”. Early sources state that there were seventeen villages on the plain in the early Ming. By the late Qing other sources record twenty-nine villages. Currently, we count sixty-four villages organized into seven ritual alliances spread across the plain.

Local systems evolved for the collective management of the irrigation system. The 1823 *Nan'anbei shanhou zhangcheng* 南安陂善後

章程 (Rules and regulations of the Nan'an Weir) stone inscription states:

(T)he irrigation channels of the Nan'an weir pass through Guangou village where they divide into upper and lower canals. The upper canal is four feet deep, and has a deep sluice gate. It irrigates the waters of the Third *Jia* (made up of) Qianwang, Fengmei, and Xiaoxiao village. At Shijian, the canal irrigates Jiangkou and the Xinfeng dikelands, the Ou dikelands, and the Li dikelands. The lower canal is divided into the middle and lower canals. The middle canal irrigates the fields of Shanglin, Shiting, Pucheng, Dongshi, Xiliu, Yupu, Tiantou, and Houguo. The lower canal irrigates the Fourth *Jia* (consisting of) Wu mound, Dong Cai, Xiacuo, and Goushang villages, as well as Nangshansi monastery, Cheng mound, Lower Mound, and Waidai (outer dikelands) fields. Prior to the opening up of the lower canal into the middle and lower (secondary) canals, there was the seven inch opening (*hankou* 涵口) which irrigated the Jiangkou *Jia* as well as Hedai dikelands and the Zhuo dikelands fields. Each of the above territories had its own water, and if anyone tried to secretly block it or steal water, (these villages) are permitted to (draft a complaint) and on the basis of this declaration to take their case to the Office for the Welcoming of Immortals (within the Donglaisi temple) for a resolution and an investigation.

The 1884 *Nan'anbei shanhou zhangcheng* (Rules and regulations of the Nan'an Weir) stone inscription further explains that:

The Nan'an Weir has established one person each as the Gongzheng 公正 (public rectifier), and the Fuzheng 副正 (Assistant Rectifier). Each of the fifteen *Jia* select one *Nenggan* 能幹 (capable person) each. Whenever it is time to repair the irrigation system, each *Jia* provides the (grain) yield of so many mu 畝, gathering strings of thousands of cash on the basis of the amount of land under irrigation. The responsibility for seeking out and gathering these funds is that of the *Nenggan* (capable persons), who are not allowed to refuse or conceal (any funds). When the irrigation canals silt up with mud, the repairs are done by each *Jia* that lives along the (relevant) section of the canal. As for the dredging of sand and stones at the head of the Weir, the old regulations take the amount of land of each *Jia* into consideration, and send out the appropriate number of workers, and the responsibility for mobilizing these laborers falls upon the *Nenggan* of each *Jia*, who cannot refuse or be lazy about this. Should the *Nenggan* of a particular *Jia* pass away, then another person will be publicly selected by the elders to take his place, and no one should try to pass this responsibility off, as this would lead to the demise of public affairs.

This system of *Nenggan* or *Jiashou* 甲首 (heads of the *Jia*) managed the everyday repairs to the irrigation system, but larger repairs required the

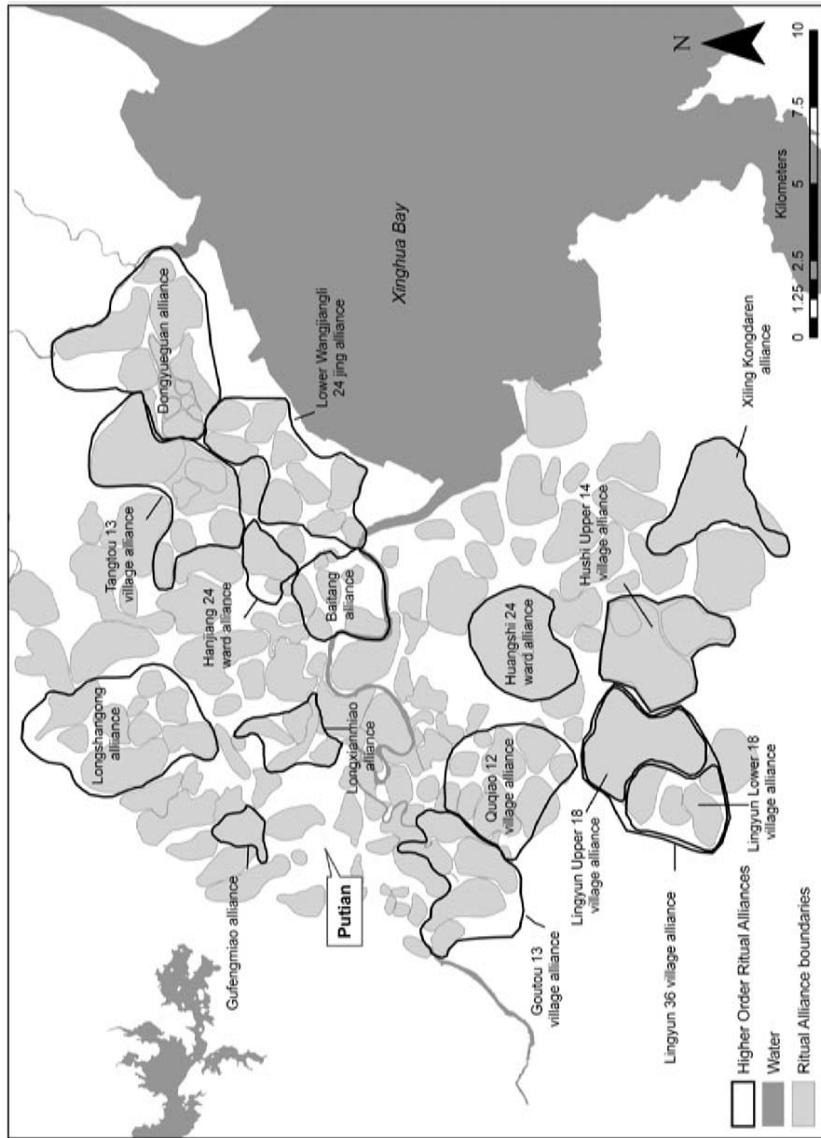
intervention of local gentry and the local government.⁴² A higher level of leadership thus played a role in the administration of the irrigation system. According to a stele dated 1727 and entitled *Xiu Nan'anbei ji* 修南安陂記 (*Record of the repairs of the Nan'an Weir*), “According to the ancient regulations, each of the twelve villages of Jiangkou selects one *Jia* head, and each year they provide one picul of grain to cover the costs of repairs. If the *Jia* Heads steal the grain for their personal profit, this leads to the ruin of public affairs. This kind of corvée service is managed by a committee made up of Jiansheng Yu Tingliang, Shengyuan Li Guozhang, and Liyuan Li Tingfang.”

Finally, another excerpt from the 1884 *Nan'anbei shanhou zhangcheng* 南安陂善後章程 (*Rules and regulations of the Nan'an Weir*) stone inscription states that:

The stone water pipes along the upper channel irrigate the paddy fields of Jiangkou 江口, Duweitou 度圍頭, Waixindai 外新埭, Xinfengdai 新豐埭, Oudai 歐埭, and Zhuodai 卓埭. In the past stones were placed to check the water flow and force the water into the mouths of the water pipes. Now because over and over again these stones have been removed and hidden away, not enough water is attained, which has led to disputes, and this has also led to the banks and dikes of the upper and lower channels being dug into and harmed. Now the relative heights of the upper and lower channels are clearly different. The border marking dikes along the middle stretches have been paired down, so that there are many holes through which water escapes. This has led to the water from the upper channel gradually all flowing into the lower channel. Thus the irrigation (of these areas) is unequal. As a result of this there are often conflicts, which have led to deaths.

These disputes were mediated by the management committee of the Jiuliang irrigation system, who met in the Donglaisi Baogongci 東來寺報功祠, a shrine set up to honor the founders and repairers of

⁴² An earlier effort to bring the local *Nenggan* 能幹 (capable person) and *Jingli* 經理 (managers) responsible for the maintenance of the irrigation system together in an overall repair of the main sluice gates of the Putian plains can be found in a proclamation written by Qi Biaoja 祁彪佳 (1602–45) and included in the *Qi Biaoja wengao* 祁彪佳文稿 (1991:2761–63). District Magistrate Qi summoned the *Nenggan* of the southern plain to the City God temple in Putian to deliberate on how much land they had, and how much they should contribute towards repairs. They would also agree on a collective contract. He issued special account books to ensure that funds were spent appropriately. His role, while important, was more one of coordinating the equitable gathering of funds, and supervising the dispersal of funds. The actual maintenance work was done by the *Nenggan* and the *Jingli* of each region. Many of them are named in this text.



the irrigation system. The members of the board were largely drawn from the temple management committee of the Dongyueguan 東嶽觀 (Temple of the Eastern Peak), the most powerful temple in the Jiangkou plains. This temple is to this day the center of the system-wide processions held during the *Yuanxiao* festival, when all five regional ritual alliances within the irrigation system join together in a higher order procession, marked with elaborate rituals involving representatives of all the Daoist ritual troupes in the area (*Shigonghui* 師公會).⁴³

Pirate raids and rise of pu (police/self defense units)

Other factors contributed to the spread of ritual alliances during the 16th century. The rise of mercantile capitalism within China was especially rapid and disruptive along the Southeast coast. Rent resistance became common, and an impoverished underclass of coastal fishermen and smugglers developed along the Fujian coast. The arrival of Western mercantile trade in Southeast Asia and the China Sea led to increasing tensions within long-established Asian trading networks. Eventually, the Ming government reversed course on its plans for extensive overseas naval expeditions, and instead banned international trade. This policy only increased the instances of piracy and coastal raiding (Antony 2003, Murray 1987). Between 1410 and 1563, roaming armies of pirates attacked the Putian plain fifteen times, leading to a loss of life estimated to total over 150,000 people. These pirates were a mixed group, made up of coastal smugglers, transnational traders, and displaced peoples. In Chinese sources they are often called “dwarf pirates”, implying that they were marauders from Japan, but historians have concluded that the majority were in fact Chinese. The most devastating raids in the greater Fujian area occurred between 1555 and 1563, during which time one prefectoral seat (Xinghua), eleven county seats, four guard garrisons and four battalion garrisons in the coastal regions of Fujian were captured by the pirates, and a further twenty-two provincial, prefectoral, and county seats and other local defence centers were besieged. In 1562, shortly after one group of pirates had been driven off by General Qi Jiguang 戚繼光, the walled city of Putian was captured for two months by another pirate army numbering over

⁴³ The inscriptions quoted above are from stelae preserved in the Nanan Weir Irrigation Bureau Office in Jiangkou, Putian.

4000 men, and four hundred members of the gentry were put to death, along with thousands of commoners. The massacred gentry included nineteen *jinshi* (Metropolitan Graduates), fifty-three *juren* (Provincial Graduates), and 356 *xiucuai* 秀才 (County Students). The Putian Censor Lin Run 李潤 (1530–1569), wrote in a memorial the same year (1562) to the court that:

The two districts of Xinghua prefecture stretch for over an area of over 220 *li*... Recently this area has suffered from the ravages of dwarf (pirate armies). In the past eight years, two out of every ten have died beneath their knives. Four or five in ten have been kidnapped for ransom by these pirates. As for those who have fled to other commanderies, they are beyond number. Each prefecture has been struck by plague, and it is especially bad in the walled towns and cities. In one ward, five or six of ten have died in each family. Even families of several tens of people have lost sixty or seventy per cent, and some have been completely exterminated. The sound of weeping is heard in every doorway, and corpses pile up and block the roadways. Beyond the city walls, for a thousand leagues, everything is a wasteland. Tall grasses grow in the paddy fields, and thorns grow in the marketplaces. Formerly, *li* sub-cantons that had ten *tu* (hundred households) now have only one or two, and (those *tu*) that once had ten *jia* (sets of ten households) now have only one or two *jia* left in each (Lin Run, *Yuanzhi shugao* 懿治疏稿, cited in Zheng (2001:203)).

In 1558, Shi Lishou of Putian wrote a more personal account of these harrowing experiences in his “Record of the Suffering from the Pirates”, an essay included in the (*Jinjiang*) *Linpu tang Shishi zupu* [Genealogy of the Linputang Shi Lineage (of Jinjiang)]:

In 1550, I was responsible for the sacrificial ritual. So many lineage members came to participate in the sacrifice that it was difficult to count them; the descendants young and old numbered over eight hundred in all. Who would have expected that in 1559 the pirates would enter Fujian? At first they attacked Hanjiang. People worried that they were not safe. They observed the smoke from the burning and were warned. In 1559 and 1560, the pirates repeatedly invaded our land, but we could still flee behind the walls of the coastal forts, so for the most part our lives were protected and saved. Then by 1561, the pirates occupied a stockade on the coast, assembled together, and did not disperse. On November 5, they took the Shenu police office, capturing and killing more than half the people. On March 12, 1562, they took Yongning guard garrison, and only a few remained from our whole lineage. Everyone cried out beneath the knives and scurried about amidst the swords. Ransoms had to be paid to recover the living; money had to be paid to recover the corpses of the dead. Bodies and skeletons lay scattered in the wilds; dwellings were burnt down. Luckily, the site of the ancestral hall survived, but the

images of the four early ancestors were all broken. Furthermore, pestilence arose at the same time. Those who had been lucky enough to escape the hands of the fierce brigands now passed away one after the other morning and night...I was besieged in Aocheng. Of the ten members of my family only two survived. Of my four younger brothers only one survived. Of our dozens of young servants, not a single one remained. In the senior branch there were only sixty odd people, and in the second branch only fifty odd...Now, in 1585, I am sixty-one years of age. Observing how the population of the lineage is ever increasing, I wish to compile the genealogy, but the research is difficult. Luckily, Shiyu and Guangbiao, great-great uncles of the second branch, had a genealogy they had taken to Quanzhou, which has been brought back and shown to me. This indicates that Heaven does not intend to destroy the transmission of our lineage. So I have written this record to show to the later generations, to let them know the reasons for our decline at that time, and also to show the descendants of later generations the circumstances of our suffering then. (Zheng, 2001:203–04, trans. M. Szonyi).

Although the lineage genealogy was reconstructed twenty years after the pirate invasions, it would take another sixty years to rebuild the ancestral hall. The impact of these attacks was long-lasting.

Zheng (2001) has pointed out an important effect of the pirate raids and the coastal evacuation on the local society of the Putian area. He argues that many lineages underwent a profound transformation from inheritance lineages or control-subordination lineages into contractual lineages over this period.⁴⁴ Many lineages found themselves fundamentally transformed by these disruptions. For example, the “Preface on the Reconstruction of the Family Temple” of the Zhu of Qianjiang in Xianyou, dated 1573, and included in the (*Xianyou*) *Qianjiang Zhushi zupu* [*Lineage Genealogy of the Qianjiang Zhu lineage of Xianyou*] states:

In 1322, Wenyi first constructed this shrine in three halls, to serve as the site for the descendants to venerate and require [the ancestors]. But he worried that without funds to support the sacrifice, the descendants might slide into lack of respect. So he left behind fields, orchards, moun-

⁴⁴ Zheng (2001) presents a transformative structural typology of ritual units, beginning with nuclear families and developing into communal “inheritance” lineages, which build up collective resources through the growth of lineage estates that eventually come under the control of a managerial elite. This leads to the development of a control-subordination lineage. The latter may be tempted to diversify by selling shares in the lineage, thereby transforming into a “contractual lineage”. Zheng points out that lineages can transform into new types, or return to earlier forms, or even dissolve back into nuclear families, depending on a range of variables.

tain land, and [land that could be reclaimed from the] sea...In the late Jiajing 嘉靖 period of the current dynasty, the barbarians swarmed up, destabilizing Fujian and Guangdong, doing evil in the localities, and treating people's lives like they were no more than weeds. The bodies piled up and the blood flowed. The descent-line and the community altars were laid waste. The people were unable to live together and bring order to their locale. Only now in 1573 has peace returned. Fathers and sons who were formerly separated live together, flourish, and know the joys of life. Still, after the turmoil and flight, we live in peace but reflect on that dangerous time. We care not for profit, and our striving for righteousness is like a thirst. But if no one takes charge, there is no way to get things started...Therefore it has been decided that for the fundraising for the meritorious [re]construction [of the ancestral hall], the initial unit [of donation] shall be twenty teals. We do not dare to allow less than twenty, for less would be insufficient to accomplish the matter. We do not dare to ask for more than twenty, for more would frighten men's hearts and would lead to the task being abandoned. In this way, everyone came to an agreement. The date was February 20. It was also decided to draw up a register, to record the names and branches of all the donors. This will be used to restrain people's hearts, and will also have the sense of creating a blood oath between them. Next, the record can be used as the standard [for collecting funds] and people will ready the money so that their names are marked off...In this way, our efforts will harmonize and our hearts link, and we can then accomplish this meritorious matter. (Zheng, 2001:206–06, trans. M. Szonyi).

This is an example of the formation of a contractual lineage, where shares were sold to sponsors, some years after the pirate invasions. Thus the attacks led in many cases to profound structural changes within local lineages.

Lin Jiechun, a gentry leader from Zhangpu, wrote in an essay entitled “General Account of Military Defense” in the Wanli period (1573–1620) that “the strategy for maintaining defense and avoiding capture lies in building forts and training the local militia (*xiang-bing* 鄉兵)”.⁴⁵ The militarization of local society along the Southeast Chinese coast can be traced back to this period. In Putian, District Magistrate Qi Biaoja 祁彪佳 (1602–45) may have been behind the establishment of a unified system of local defense/policing called *pu* (defensive wards) which would link several villages through their common obligations to defend themselves (and the prefectural city) in the

⁴⁵ See Zheng 2001:209, citing the 1699 *Zhangpu xianzhi* 漳浦縣志, juan 11.

event of a major pirate attack.⁴⁶ Eventually, the entire irrigated plain (and other coastal areas) of Putian would be divided into *pu* units. In the Qing dynasty, these units, which were considerably smaller than the *li*-sub-cantons, and in some cases smaller than the ritual alliances as well, became the primary locus of official coercive administration (policing, taxation, local defense). These *pu* territorial units have left their mark on the regional ritual system, especially in the Hushi area at the southernmost edge of the Mulan Weir southern irrigated plain. There several temples are known to this day as *pu* temples. In one large ritual alliance still active today, a local man dresses up as the “*pu* official”, and first announces the procession to the “*Pu* Headquarters”, before being carried in a sedan chair to lead the procession to all the villages of the alliance.

The pirate raids created other reasons to establish higher order temples within the Putian plains. In 1566, the gentry of Huangshi sent a delegation to Wudangshan 武當山 to request a division of incense from Xuantian shangdi 玄天上帝, and brought a statue of that powerful god back to the newly built Beichengong 北辰宮 (Temple of the Northern Asterism) near Huangshi. The immediate reason the Huangshi literati sought the protection of Xuantian shangdi was that pirate invasions had decimated their community (also known as Shuinan). The moans of countless ghosts were heard at night, and local leaders prayed that Xuantian shangdi would settle their laments and suppress any lingering demonic influences. Of course, the act of moving outside the local symbolic universe, traveling to Wudangshan, a mountain center of the cult of Xuantian shangdi prominently patronized by the Ming court, and bringing back an icon of the god from that sacred site was one way

⁴⁶ This administrative territorial system should be distinguished from the *Pu* of the postal system as well as from the *Pu* of the city ward system. Qi Biaoja's efforts to gather the villages of the Putian region into *baojia* 保甲 (mutual protection and surveillance units) during the pirate invasions is recorded in the *Qi Zhongmin gong nianpu* 祁忠敏公年譜, *Beijing tushuguan zang zhenben nianpu congkan*, 1999: vol. 63, p. 400. In a proclamation included in *Qi Biaoja wengao* 祁彪佳文稿 (1991:2770), Qi outlines a procedure for listing the names of those responsible for manning the hours of the watch within each *pu*. The division of the Putian plain into *pu* administrative territorial units, along with the associated dates of each *pu* for (military?) service, is itemized in the *Xinghua junchengji* 興化郡城記 [Record of Xinghua Prefectural City], an undated manuscript in the Putian city library collection. See also the images of *pu* defensive sites (?) on the *rongbei* 戎備 (Defensive fortifications) maps at the front of the (Qianlong) *Putian xianzhi*, juan 11, 25–30 (1968:307–309) and the maps appended to juan 2, *Yudi* 輿地 (territory), 62–65 (1968:98–100).

to assert symbolic superiority. Perhaps this was also a response to the recent exclusion of the descendants of the Fourteen Surnames from the temples dedicated to Li Hong at the side of the Mulan Weir.⁴⁷

To this day, the Beichengong temple organizes, in the fourth lunar month, a great procession throughout the regional ritual alliance, moving from the Beichengong to the Guchengong 谷城宮 temple at the opposite end of the twenty-four wards of Huangshi town, and reaffirming the alliance through the performance of processions, Daoist rites, and the overall ritual event.

The *Beichengongzhi* 北辰宮志 (*Temple Gazetteer of the Temple of the Northern Asterism*) includes a song composed in the late Qing (around 1836). This song clearly identifies the early alliance between the four great surnames of Zhu, Wu, Yu, and Chen, and praises their efforts in digging the Mulan irrigation canal in the Song dynasty. The song goes on to sing of how successful their descendants have been in attaining success in examinations and official positions, and how high ranking representatives of each lineage have intermarried. Then the song relates the devastation of the Ming-Qing transition, and the miraculous appearance of the name of Xuantian shangdi in the form of a swarm of bees on a tree. An Imperial Censor from the Zhu lineage donated the land where the tree stood for the temple, and other Zhu and Wu lineage members contributed funds for its construction. The visit to Wudangshan to present incense (and bring back charged incense to the new temple) is described, complete with the three times the incense fire went out, to test the sincerity of the worshippers. The god pacified the Huangshi region and drove out the demons and ghosts of the dead left over from the pirate invasions. At that point, a new temple committee was formed out of three lineages, and a pact was made to recarve the god's statue once every ten years. On these occasions the god would be carried in a great procession (the gazetteer describes current processions in elaborate detail). The song relates that these customs were maintained into the Qing dynasty, and that leadership continued to come from the three lineage alliance, although later only the Zhu and Wu lineages continued donations. Later still,

⁴⁷ An interesting parallel phenomenon is the rise of Yuhuang shangdi temples in recent years. New temples are claiming higher order status by setting up statues of Yuhuang shangdi. This can be seen in the Xiangshan temple and in the recently built Yuhuangdian on Tadoushan in Xianyou.

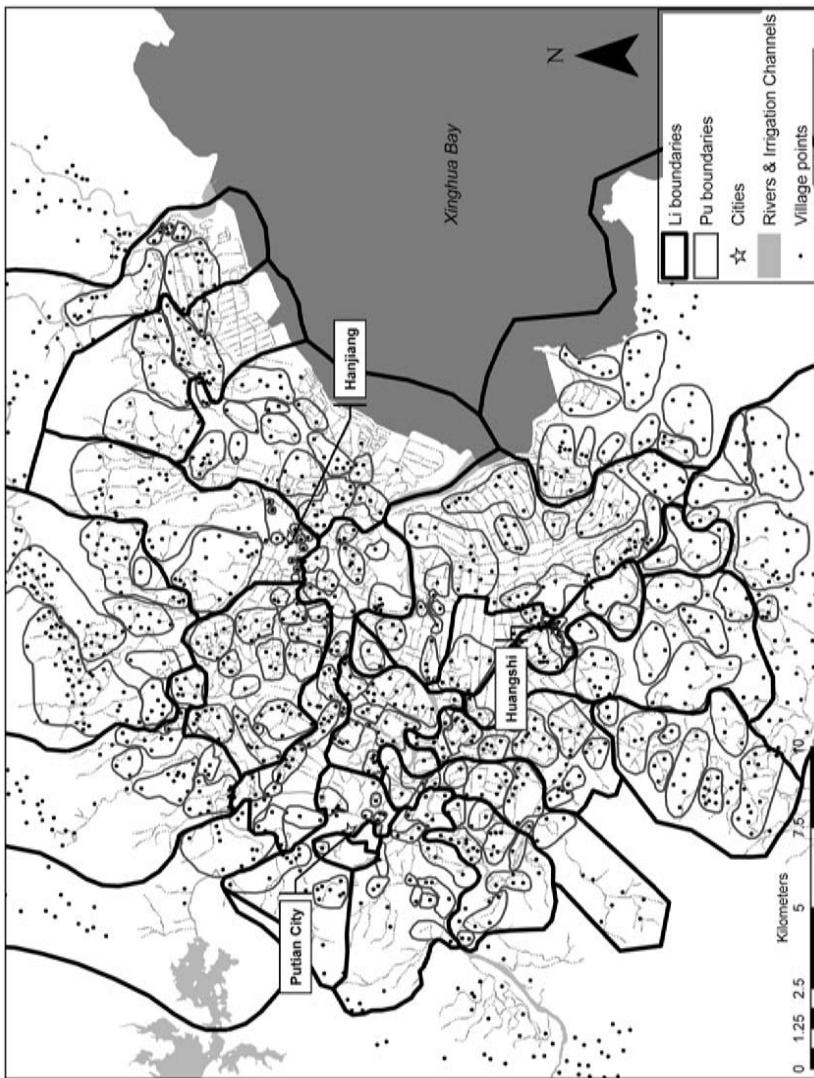
the Zhang lineage of Dongzhu village gained entry into the temple committee by paying 400 ounces of silver. The song goes on to recount the renovations to the temple in the Kangxi (1662–1722) and Qianlong periods (1736–95), and to detail the many miracles carried out by the god. The remainder of the song describes over a dozen occasions when various District Magistrates had come in solemn processions, dressed in mourning, to pray to the god for rain. These successful interventions of the gods were rewarded with official rites of thanksgiving, inscribed plaques and testimonials. The gazetteer also includes a Republican period narrative poem, describing the visit of a District Magistrate to the temple to pray for rain in 1943.

Currently, the Beichengong Xuantian shangdi goes on procession every three years to the Guchenggong temple at the opposite end of Huangshi town. It is difficult to say when this connection was made with Guchenggong, but inscriptions in that temple indicate a great deal of activity in the 1730's, just at the time when the thirty-six village alliance of Lingyun Temple on Mt. Hu was forming. Perhaps we can see these alliances as counter-balancing forces, the one representing the powerful gentry of Huangshi, the other the poorer villages along the edge of Mt. Hu, mostly beyond the reach of the Mulan irrigation system. These hillside villages would become one of the strongholds of the white and black banner alliances in the late Qing, and later of Republican period rebel leaders.

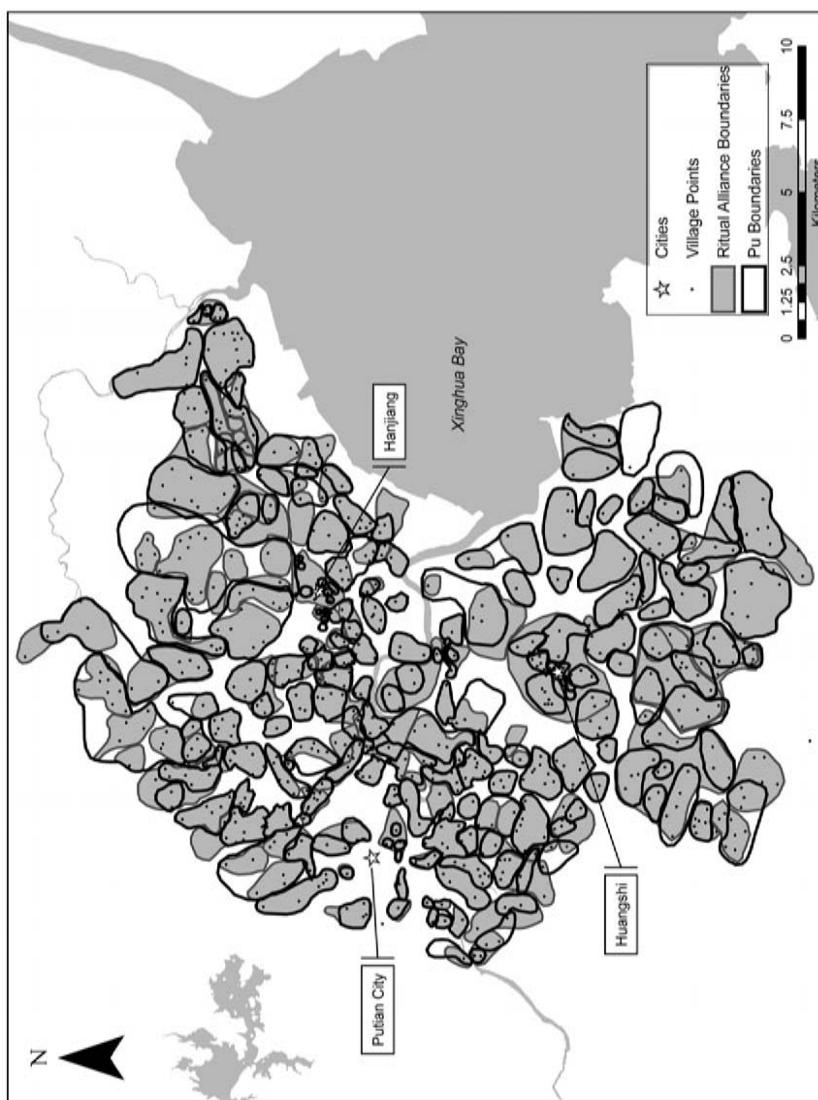
The pirate invasions that led to the founding of the Beichengong were the result of many factors, including the physical proximity to the sea of the towns and villages of the irrigated plain, the relative wealth of the literati lineages of the region, and the ban on overseas trade instituted by the Ming court (partially in response to these raids). These raids left a deep impression on local society and folk customs. According to Shi Hongbao 施鴻保 (c. 1800–1871):

In Xinghua there is a custom to hold memorial days for the ancestors from the first till the fifth day of the New Year, to commemorate the butchering of the city by pirates during the Ming period. These five days there is no visiting, not even from neighbors. Only people who are outside immigrants do not uphold this custom. However, the local people keep out of sight then and do not answer calls. (*Min zaji* 閩雜記 [*Miscellaneous records of Fujian*]).

The establishment of *Pu* self-defensive and policing administrative regions was one major official response to the pirate attacks. *Map 25 of Pu Boundaries within the Li sub-cantons on the Putian Plain* shows



Map 25: Pu boundaries within the Li sub-cantons on the Putian plain



Map 26: Regional ritual alliances and Pu boundaries on the Putian plain

the distribution of the *pu* within the *li*-sub-cantons, which they seldom if ever transgress. This makes sense, as the *pu* were administrative territories which would have been subsidiary to the *li*-sub-cantons in the administrative structure of control over local society. The following *Map of Regional Ritual Alliances and Pu Boundaries on the Putian Plain* enables a comparison of the *pu* administrative boundaries with the boundaries of the self-created local regional ritual alliances. As can be seen, the boundaries correspond in many cases, while in others, the *pu* administrative boundaries cut across or between locally formed alliances. One can surmise that in some cases, authorities chose to work within existing ritual alliances while in other cases they established new administrative territories that divided up long-standing local allegiances.

As mentioned above, some of these *pu* administrative units also mutated into regional ritual alliances.

The rise of the Three in One

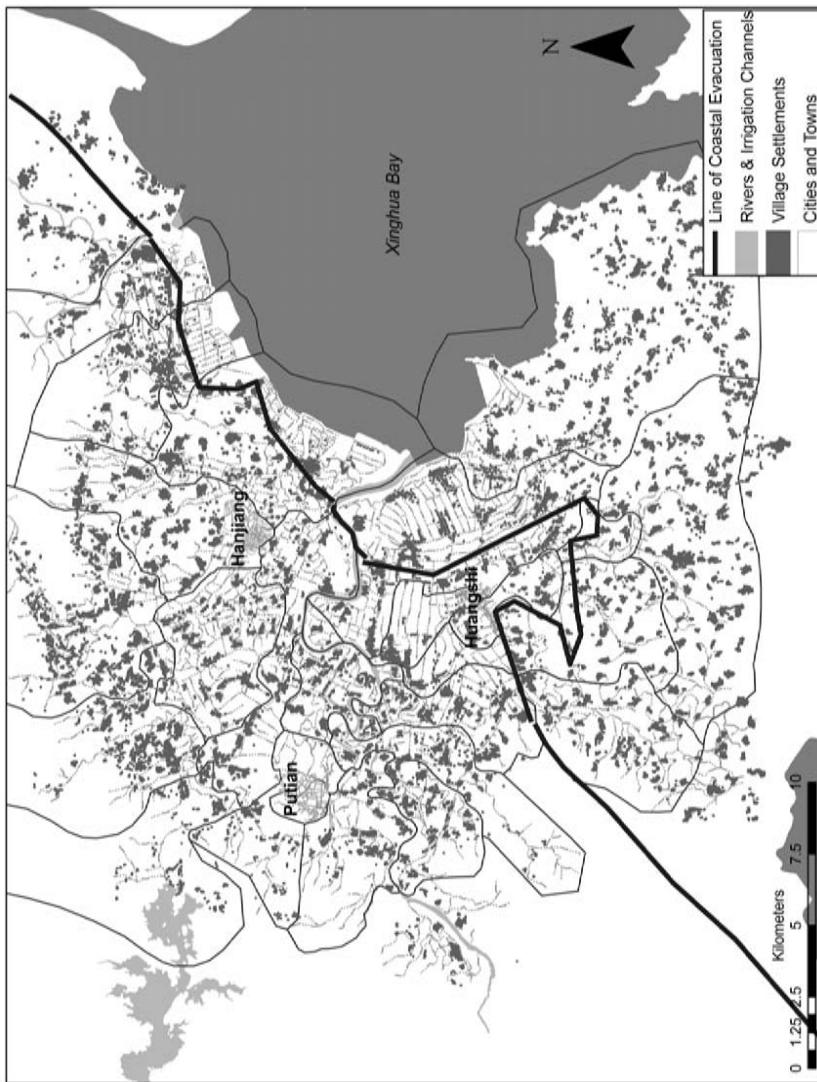
Another highly significant response to the pirate raids of the mid 16th century came from Lin Zhao'en 林兆恩 (1517–1598), founder of the Three in One, who spent his own funds to hire Guangdong mercenaries to defend Putian city. Lin had already achieved a reputation as a local sage when the pirates struck Putian city. They were careful to spare his house in the sacking of the city. In the aftermath of these raids, Lin mobilized his followers to retrieve and bury thousands of corpses, and tended to the cremation of many thousands more, performing rites for the deliverance of their souls. These actions helped secure Lin considerable local respect and support which helped shield him from accusations of heterodoxy. His movement began to build temples in the late 1590s, in which Lin was deified as the god Xiawuni 夏午尼 (parallel to Confucius, Laozi, and Shakyamuni Buddha). Over sixty temples were built within two decades of his death in 1598 (Dean 1998:134).

The Three in One movement was dedicated to rebuilding the moral foundations of local community in Putian and Xianyou, in the wake of the disruptions of the pirate raids. The movement provided an avenue for the active performance of morality, through study of the Confucian classics, self-cultivation in the Nine Stages of the Heart Method of Daoist inner alchemy and Buddhist meditation, and the performance

of rituals seeking to re-impose cosmic harmony on a troubled time. The movement was also committed to charity, good works, and moral outreach. The Three in One divided into several sects, such as the Wuben 悟本, which was revived in the late Qing by Chen Zhida and Liang Puyao 梁普耀, the Mingxia 明夏 (founded by disciple Lin Zhenming 林貞明), and the Sanyi 三一 sects. The Wuben emphasizes daily rites of offering and scripture recitation (*wen daochang* 文道場), self-cultivation and scripture exegesis while the Mingxia and Sanyi sects emphasize ritual performance (*wu daochang* 武道場). Many of the temples of the Three in One in Putian have statues of Zhang Sanfeng 張三峰 and Zhuo Wanchun 卓晚春, Daoist figures who influenced Lin Zhao'en in his decision to renounce the official examinations and pursue self cultivation and inner alchemy. Other figures often represented in Three in One temples include the Four Attendants (Lu Wenhui 盧文輝, Zhang Hongdu 張洪都, Lin Zhijing 林至敬 (Lin Zhenming 林貞明), and Zhu Fengshi 朱逢時). The Three Transmitters are Lin Zhao'en, Lu Wenhui, and Dong Shi 董史. The *Linzi mensheng shilu* 林子門聖實錄 (*True record of the disciples of Master Lin*), composed by Dong Shi, reveals that soon after its founding the Three in One movement had spread to include local merchants, fishermen, and commoners, as well as to some lower literati and even some high ranked local officials.

*The Qing invasion and the coastal evacuation and its
after-effects—jiewai mentality and local society*

Less than a hundred years after the sacking of Putian by Ming pirate invasions in 1562, Manchu armies overran Putian in 1646, and a series of sieges and counterattacks continued through 1648. Vivid accounts of the horrors of war and the destruction of the city and surrounding villages are found in Chen Hong 陳鴻 (1618–1698) *Qingchu Pubian xiaocheng* 清初莆變小變 [*Minor account of the Putian incident at the start of the Qing dynasty*] and his *Xichao Pujing xiaoji* 熙朝莆靖小紀 [*Minor record of the Putian area in the Kangxi period*] as well as in Yu Yang's 余颺 *Pubian jishi* 莆變紀事 [*Record of the Putian incident*]. The period of 1653–1660 was marked by attacks by the troops of Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功, who succeeded in capturing the walled city of Xianyou in 1654. Vermeer (1990) estimates that the population of Putian declined by half over this period. These raids led to the imposi-



Map 27: Qing coastal evacuation line

tion of a coastal evacuation of villages to within 20 *li* of Putian city (see *Map of the Coastal Evacuation*) from 1661–1669. This move affected nearly half of the villages of Putian (but only a far smaller number of those in the irrigated plain). This forced resettlement led to a decline of the sea dikes, which collapsed, flooding portions of the irrigated plain all the way to Putian city in 1664. The line of the coastal evacuation is indicated on the map of the *Qing coastal evacuation*.

The coastal evacuations of the early Qing extended the period of disruption initiated by the pirate invasions of the 1560's. According to Yu Yang's *Record of the Incidents in Pu[tian]*:

Our county is hemmed in by mountains, extensive in the plains, and stretches out into the sea. In the mountains there is one village every several *li* and each village may have only a few families. In the plains, residents live in close proximity, distributed like stars in the sky or pieces on a chessboard. The larger [villages] may have several hundred families, and the smaller ones several hundred people. This is also the case on the coast...One surname may have two or three thousand adult males, and one village one or two thousand people. Since the pirates created disturbance for ten years, there were considerable losses in population. In the roughly one hundred years of peace between 1562 and 1644, the numbers increased. There is no knowing about other [places], but in Xialin, which is my mother's natal village and so I visited there often, (and) each year as many as several dozen new sons were reported. If one surname was like this, the situation in other surnames can also be imagined. Thus in our locality the population has never increased at the rate in did in the Chongzhen 崇禎 period. After the change of dynasty...as soon as the official troops came out, be it to do battle or to pacify forts, not even a chicken or a pig remained in the villages. It is estimated that more than half the populace died in this period. In the autumn of 1663, the coastal evacuation order was issued. Those who survived on the coast fled and roamed about. All over was heard the mournful call of wild geese. It was impossible to put things in order. Moreover, in 1664 and 1664, there were the disasters of flood and drought, and innumerable service levies were imposed simultaneously. Among those within the boundaries [of the evacuation], some died fulfilling the service levies, some of hunger, and some from tax pressures. It came to the point where there were lanes with no residents and roads on which on one walked. (cited in Zheng, 2001:211–212, trans. M. Szonyi).

Given these disruptions, it is not surprising that more and more lineages transformed into contractual lineages. Even some lineages, such as the Cai of Dongsha in Putian, who had managed to restore a hierarchical control-subordination lineage after the coastal evacuation, gradually gave way in the Yongzheng 雍正 (1723–1735) period to a

contractual lineage. A passage in the *Jin'nan Caishi zupu* [(Putian) *Jin'nan Cai lineage genealogy*] of 1730 states:

In his life [great-grandfather Zhong] often accomplished things when he was roused to do so. In the Yongzheng period, our lineage had many troubles, such that the sacrificial property was wasted and diminished, and as for the annual sacrifice to the ancestors of the descent-line, even if it was not cut off, it hung on by only a thread. No one who had a heart was not worried. One day [Zhong] said to the lineage members: "Now it is extremely urgent that we recover the sacrificial property. I propose that every household which is willing should contribute one picul of grain. This can be used to recover some of the sacrificial land, and the members of these households may participate in the sacrifice. Those who are unable [to pay] will surely be ashamed that they do not participate in the sacrifice, and will be encouraged to try to do so." Lineage uncle Yizuo said, "This will be difficult. [The households of the lineage members] are not equally wealthy, nor are they all of equal size. If you are indeed able to persuade fifty households, then I will give you 3,000 cash to participate in the sacrifices. If you are unable to do so, they you must pay me twice this amount." [Zhong] said, "If you really mean this, we should draw up a contract." So lineage uncles Jiansou, Tianren, Xiezen, and others agreed to serve together as guarantors [for the contract] which was given to great-grandfather, and the outcome awaited. Great-grandfather used his righteousness to move people, and more than sixty names wanted to contribute. Unfortunately, in that year the fall harvest was disappointing, and only 60 percent of them actually paid. [Zhong] spent many days and much energy, but he did not reach his goal. He bravely decided that he would pay on behalf of each of the lineage members, one after the other, allowing them to repay him and clear their debt as they could...after this, the accumulated [funds] were gradually revived, first by a few, then by many, and finally the complete [amount was raised]. (cited in Zheng, 2001:226, trans. M. Szonyi).

The decline of the Cai hierarchical lineage during this period was related to the weakness of the gentry stratum following the disruptions of the Qing takeover and the coastal evacuations. The Cai lineage would revive its former glory once again later in the Qianlong period (1736–95). In fact, many residentially concentrated lineages expanded during the 18th century. There was no teleological impulse moving all lineages towards a contractual model. Many regrouped into control-subordination lineages, with hierarchical structures of power, managerial elites, and tenant farmers. Nevertheless, the coastal evacuation left profound psychic scars on the collective memory of the inhabitants of the Putian plains. These memories are ritually re-enacted every three years, when a procession from the walled fort of Puxi visits the City

God of Hanjiang to pay respects to their own god, who they moved for safekeeping prior to the coastal evacuation. Later, the god refused to return, preferring to preside over the rapid growth of the commercial town. Currently, the villages that were gradually reclaimed after the lifting of the coastal evacuation tend to have weaker lineages and more varied kinds of temples and temple networks than the more established villages of the interior.

The Single Whip tax reforms and Qing tax reforms

At the beginning of the Ming dynasty, households were registered by occupation and by residence within the *lijia* system. Both forms of registration entailed various kinds of taxation and corvée labor. As Zheng (2001) and Szonyi (2002) have shown, there were a high proportion of military households registered in Fujian, up to a third of the total population. As state control over the household registration system declined, lineages with military registration developed rapidly in order to work out their own solutions to the military service requirements (which could be paid for in cash). As for the *lijia* system, in which larger lineages and households were singled out to be *Lishou* 里首 (heads of the hundred families of the *Li* sub-canton) and *Jiashou* 甲首 (heads of the ten family units), He Qiaoyuan 何喬遠 noted in 1627 that:

The service levy obligations of the *lijia* households originally consisted only of pressing for tax payment and assembling labor for public works. Later they became responsible for meeting various government expenses. They had to take care of the [official] sacrificial expenses, the Village Drinking ritual, and the ceremony of Welcoming the Spring, for example. Gradually this extended to paying all kinds of miscellaneous personal expenses of the officials. All kinds of expenses appeared for which there was no basis. As soon as a single document was issued, there was immediately no way to avoid it. Moreover, the secretaries and the *yamen* runners also demanded bribes and money in this manner. The *lijia* households were pushed into bankruptcy. (*Minshu* 閩書, j. 39, cited in Zheng, 2001: 291, trans. M. Szonyi).

In theory, every ten years Yellow Registers were supposed to have been compiled to select and rotate the positions of *Li* and *Jia* heads. But people devised endlessly creative means to conceal the size of their families, to the point that the number of households diminished drastically, and the numbers of *Li* and *Jia* had to be decreased. In response, by the Chenghua 成化 and Hongzhi 弘治 reign periods (1465–1505),

a fixed tax and service levy was assigned to the current *lijia* households. The state stopped trying to assess changing populations and property holdings. The *Li* and *Jia* head households gradually became permanent, hereditary positions. As Zheng Ji pointed out in his *Preface to the New Lijia Registers*:

This year my younger brother prepared to serve as *li* head (*lizhang* 里長). He assembled all those who were involved in the matter, so they could devote themselves wholeheartedly to thinking things over. They agreed that, in order to meet the exactions on schedule, they should gather and prepare this register. All of the obligations from [the ceremonies on] the Emperor's Birthday and the Village Drinking ceremony down to the most trivial of corvée services, and the various troublesome exactions, have been assessed and classified by type... Altogether, the total annual expenses are just under 500 taels. So the annual obligations of each *jia* come to between twenty and thirty taels, only one-seventh or one-eighth of the amount that used to have to be paid [when the obligations were distributed by rotation]. After the register was compiled, it was presented to the *yamen* 衙門. The one hundred and forty households of this *li* have collectively vowed to uphold it, so it will become the rule by which the annual exactions are met. (*Dongyuan wenji* 東園文集, j. 9, 7b-9b, cited in Zheng 2001:293, trans. M. Szonyi).

Zheng Ji's brother was in effect offering his services as a tax farmer, and at the same time instituting fixed, hereditary responsibilities for the individual households in the *lijia* unit. "Once the *lijia* registers had become merely formulaic and *lijia* obligations fixed, when a household estate was divided, the descendants generally did not register as separate households, but rather collectively retained the original *lijia* registration. That is, the descendants inherited and fulfilled the obligations of this registration collectively. The effect was that, after the mid-Ming, *lijia* registration became basically synonymous with lineage organization. Each *jia* simply represented a single lineage." (Zheng, 2001:295). Tax farming had become a prerogative of the dominant lineage leaders within the *lijia* (sub-canton tax units). This led to increasing class polarization.

Already in the mid-Ming, efforts known as the Single Whip tax reforms were underway to commute the complex tax system and hereditary service obligations of the early Ming into a cash standard (Huang 1974:295-305). There were many consequences to these actions, especially the decline of local government funding (since tax in cash was more readily absorbed by the central government) and, as a result, the downloading of responsibility for maintenance of local infrastructure

to local gentry, lineages, and temple networks (since corvée labor was no longer provided to the local government, and labor had to be paid for with limited cash resources).

This process took many decades, and was only completed in the early Qing dynasty. By the Qing, the very basis of taxation had shifted away from the *lijia* system to a tax on registered household population and on registered plots of land. However, since the registers no longer accurately reflected household populations (since many divided households were registered under a single *lijia* household registration account), officials attempted to distribute the tax burden more or less equally to each *li* sub-canton. As part of that process, many local officials in Fujian called for a policy of “allocating tax households to the descent line”, or in other words, they continually sought to assign the responsibility for tax collection to the lineage heads.⁴⁸

The Putian plain in the Qing: lineages, temples, and commercial associations

Vermeer (1990) argued that the Xinghua region went into a pronounced decline in the late Ming and Qing dynasties. His assessment is based on the declining rate of success of Putian scholars in the imperial examinations over the Qing dynasty, even though he notes that the decline in numbers had much to do with new quotas on examination candidates imposed on the region.⁴⁹ However, many other indicators suggest that Putian prospered over the Qing dynasty. Vermeer’s con-

⁴⁸ Faure (2007:359) argues that this did not mark the collapse of the original *lijia* system of rotating tax responsibilities based on regular reassessment of property by means of the Yellow Registers, but instead the successful imposition of the *lijia* system as a form of corporate lineage control of the *Jia* unit now responsible for raising tax in silver.

⁴⁹ Vermeer (1990) has very reasonably questioned whether all officials of the same surname group were in fact all the members of the same lineage, or of quite distinct lines (on this point see the descriptions of various lines of common surname groups and their early settlement patterns in the Putian plains below). Vermeer (1990) estimates the that between 1600 and 1750, the Lin, Chen and Huang surname groups made up 42 percent or 149 or the 353 *Gongshen* 貢生 (County Graduates) listed in the (Qianlong) *Putian xianzhi*, 40 percent, or 169 of the 445 *Juren* 舉人 (Provincial Graduates) from the same period, and 38 percent, or 35 out of the 115 *Jinshi* of that period. He points out however, that these surname groups made up a large proportion of the population of Putian during the Ming, and that they were divided into many different lines and branches.

clusion that “in the 17th and 18th century Pu-t’ien did not have dominant or particularly powerful lineages any more” (Vermeer, 1990:155) is questionable. Several strong lineages maintained ancestral halls in different villages of the Putian plains, including the Chen of Dongyang village, who built an enormous household compound with scores of interlocking courtyards which can still be visited in that village. Their 1817 lineage genealogy includes prefaces dating to Shaosheng 4 (1097) in the Northern Song, the Yuan, and several from the Ming (including prefaces dated Yongle 18 (1420), Tianshun 2 (1458), and Wanli 8 (1580). However, after the attacks on Putian the lineage genealogies were lost and had to be reconstructed with the assistance of other branches of the lineage living elsewhere (Dongsha). Additional prefaces dated Kangxi 45 (1706) and Qianlong 23 (1758), reveal that the lineage had re-established its genealogy and rebuilt and expanded its ancestral hall, which had originally been built in Yongle 15 (1417). The hall was expanded in Chenghua 6 (1470), and restored twice during the Kangxi period (in 1664 and again in 1681). Additional repairs were made in 1806. This was the home of the *jinshi* Chen Chiyang 陳池養 (1788–1859), who oversaw the system-wide repairs to all of the major irrigation systems of the Putian plains over three decades from the 1820s through the 1840s. In the 1850s he rebuilt the city walls of Putian and organized *tuanlian* 團練 local militia to defend Putian city from the attack of Lin Jun 林俊, which he repulsed.⁵⁰

Other major centers of local lineages include the Huang 黃 of Huangxiang 黃巷 and especially of Shiting 石庭, the Li 李 of Yangwei 洋尾, the Zhou 周 of Qingjiang 清江, the Yu 余, Wu 吳 and Xu 許 of Donghua 東華, and the Cai 蔡 of Caizhai 蔡宅. Other early ancestral halls include the Yangcheng Linshi Citang 陽城林氏祠堂 in Yangcheng 洋埕 village in Quqiao township, built in the Jiajing period (1522–1566), and repaired in 1630, 1652, 1720 and 1761. The shrine to Cai Xiang 蔡襄祠 was rebuilt in Caizhai village just south of Putian city in 1470 and enlarged in 1494. The shrine to Huang Tao 黃滔祠, built in 1304, was expanded into a lineage hall inside Putian in the

⁵⁰ *Putian Fushan Dongyang Chenshi zupu* 莆田浮山東陽陳氏族譜. (Qing) Jiaqing 22 (1817), reprinted in Beijing Tushuguan, ed., *Beijing Tushuguan cangjiapu congkan: Min Yue Qiaoxiangjuan* 北京圖書館藏家譜叢刊: 閩粵僑鄉卷. Vols. 7–9, Beijing: Beijing tushuguan chubanshe, 2000. For information on Chen Chiyang see *Chen Chiyang liejuean* [Biography of Chen Chiyang]. 6 pgs, from a late Qing draft genealogy of the *Putian Fushan Dongyang Chenshi zupu* 莆田浮山東陽陳氏族譜. n.d. Putian City library collection.

Tianshun period (1457–1464). Other ancestral homes inside the city include the Dazong bodi 大宗伯第 built in 1552 for Minister of the Board of Rites Chen Jingbang 陳經邦, with over 120 rooms. This building is still preserved largely intact. A Huang lineage hall built in 1561 also survives in Putian city, as does the Ke 柯 ancestral hall built in the Zhengde 正德 period (1506–1521) and later renamed the Xiushitang 修史堂 (Hall for the writing of history) in honor of Ke Weiqi 柯維騏 (1497–1574), editor of the *Songshi xinbian* 宋史新編 (*New history of the Song dynasty*). Other prominent ancestral halls on the Putian plain include the Lin Tan Shrine 林坦祠 built in 1517 in Yangcheng village in Quqiao, the Yu Zhao Guzhai 余釗古宅 in Chengzhu 澄渚 village in Xitianwei township, built in the Zhengde period (1506–1521) and the Hong Zhu Guzhai 洪珠古宅 built in the Jiajing period (1522–1566) in Lindun 林墩 village in Huangshi township.

Several of the great lineages of the Putian plains built ancestral halls inside the walls of Putian city, and shifted their base of operations (ritual as well as financial) to the urban center. Many of their lands were farmed by tenant farmers and the taxes were gathered by local managers. The lineage halls and their management elites inside Putian city controlled over half the land on the Putian plain by the end of the Qing.⁵¹ The large-scale development of corporately owned lineage land transformed many lineages into profit-driven economic entities, with considerable internal economic differentiation, and highly variegated business activities. Many lineages mutated away from a kin based ritual unit into a corporate structure more open to the forces of capitalism.

Lineages in Qing Putian were caught up by many contradictory tendencies: among them the centripetal pull of cultivated city life and the centrifugal pressure of increasingly scattered landholdings. Growing population pressure forced many village based lineages to send off smaller groups into new, often multi-surname, settlements in newly reclaimed land, or into new villages in the hills. These latter devel-

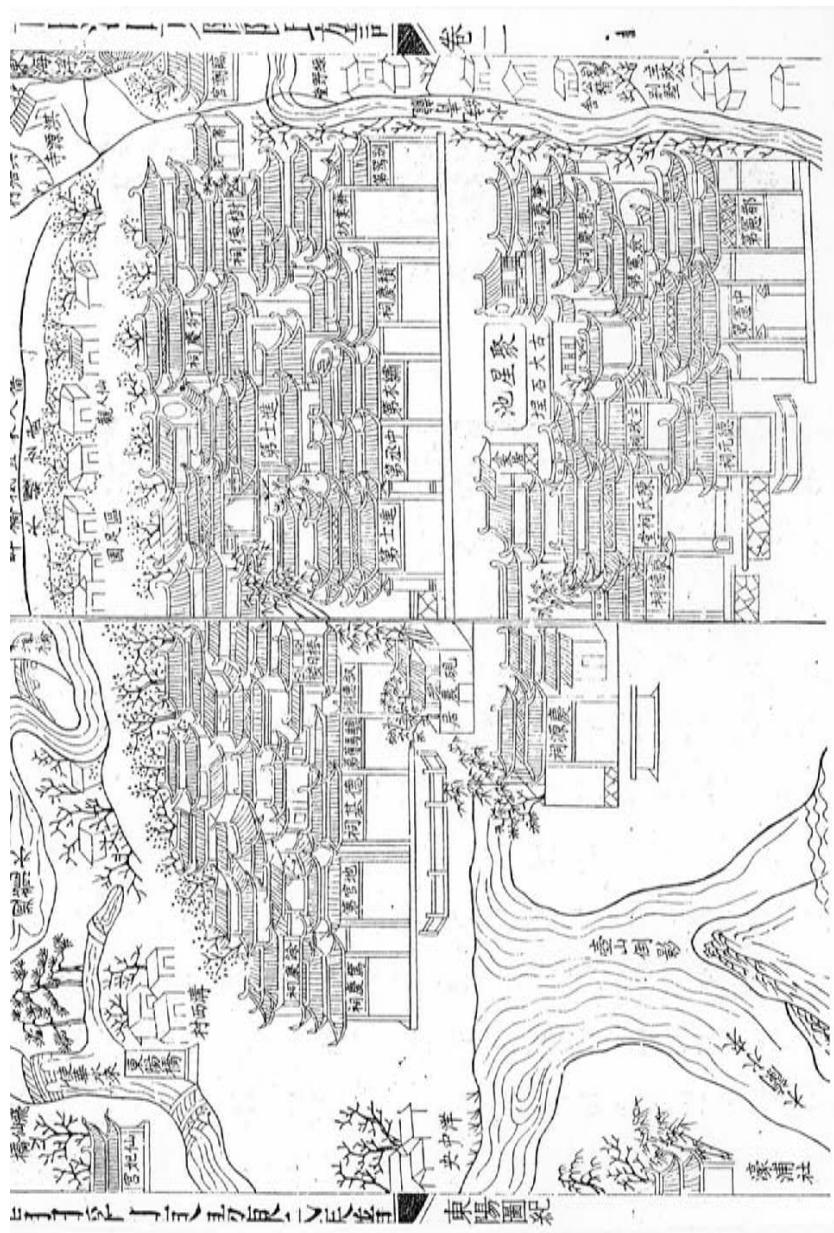
⁵¹ According to the *Fujiansheng nongcun diaocha* 福建省農村調查 [Survey of villages of Fujian province], Fuzhou: Huadong junzheng weiyuanhui, 1951, p. 110, up to 30% of land in the coastal region of Fujian was collectively owned land, that is to say mostly in lineage estates. Even higher proportions were found in the *Fujiansheng tudi gaige wenxian huibian* 福建省土地改革文獻會編 [Collected documents on the land reform of Fujian province], which found percentages of lineage held land in the Minnan area to have reached 48.9%, and 44.5% in the Minzhong region. Cited in Zheng (2001):309. These figures refer to the 1940s.

opments worked against the registration of a single localized lineage within a single *jia* household registration.⁵² In effect, by attempting to fix the lineage in place as a tax-collecting institution between state and local society, the state tried to impose a fixed form on a living, continuously transforming social institution. Local society was too complex, fluid, and interconnected to allow it to be frozen into a set relationship with the state. Thus many members of the same lineage scattered to other areas, joining the tax registration of other “lineages”, while the traditional ideal of a localized lineage co-extensive with the (single-surname) village became less and less common. The lineages scattered, and many former localized lineage centers turned into absentee landlord corporations. Larger, higher level lineages formed, and some of these further transformed into joint-stock corporations, featuring the circulation of shares beyond the limits of a single lineage. This led to the formation of mixed forms of collective ownership, merging the lineage with other village organizations such as temples or money-sharing societies watched over by a particular god (*shenminghui* 神明會). As stated by Zheng (2001:327), “by the Ming Qing period, family lineage organization had already transcended the limitations of consanguinal kinship relations and had incorporated other organizational principles capable of adapting to other social relations.”⁵³ While some villages retained strong, single lineages,⁵⁴ in more and more communities the lineage was stretched thin and ultimately mutated, merging into territorial ritual alliances. In many villages, this took the form

⁵² One instance that illustrates this point is the list of sacrificial lands used to support ancestral worship rituals in the Chen Ancestral Hall of Dongyang 東陽陳氏祠堂. According to lists of land rent in the *Putian Fushan Dongyang Chenshi Zupu* 莆田浮山東陽陳氏族譜 (*Putian Fushan Dongyang Chen lineage genealogy*), of fifteen identifiable pieces of land that remitted rents to the Chen lineage trust, only four were in Yanxingli 延興里 sub-canton where the village of Dongyang was located. Ten other pieces of land were in villages fairly nearby, but all of these were in different *Li* sub-cantons. Other pieces of land were much further away. All these rents were remitted by a variety of *nenggan* 能幹(capable men), who signed contracts for these services. Some rents were specifically marked as under the cultivation of tenant farmers. Of twenty pieces of land that supported the ancestral rites of the main descent line of the Chen lineage, ten were outside the Yanxingli sub-canton, and two were quite far away, beyond the Qing coastal evacuation boundary line. Approximately one third of the pieces of land supporting the minor descent lines of the Chen lineage were also outside Yanxingli sub-canton.

⁵³ See also Sangren (1984).

⁵⁴ Examples in the Putian plains include the Huang of Shiting, the Li of Yangwei, and the Chen of Dongyang. However, these are the exception rather than the rule in the villages of the Putian plains.



[Blockprint Image 1: The Chen Ancestral Hall of Dongyang, with the village in the background. From *Putian Fushan Chenshi zupu*, in Beijing Tushuguan cang jiapu congkan Min Yue (Qiaoxiang) juan 2, pp. 150-151.]

of underwriting the celebrations of a particular deity in a multi-deity village temple.

Beyond impressive ancestral halls such as that of the Chen lineage in Dongyang village, the situation becomes more complicated. Our survey notes the location of over 120 ancestral halls currently found in villages across the plain, and other historical references allow us to identify the former locations of twenty to thirty other ancestral halls. This suggests that there were lineage halls in about one fifth of the villages on the Putian plains. *Map 10: Ancestral Halls: including Song and Ming sites* (see *Color Plates*) shows the locations of these halls. This is a difficult map to read or interpret, and requires some commentary. Over 500 villages marked in light blue did not report the presence of an ancestral hall. Villages marked with a red dot reported one ancestral hall. Villages that reported two or more halls are marked with a red triangle. Villages that reported that their ancestral halls had been torn down or converted into warehouses, or offices of the agricultural collective, or *laorenhui* 老人會 (associations for the elderly), are marked with a red cross. A large red circle indicates the site of a Ming lineage hall, and a large red diamond the site of a Song ancestral hall or major lineage.⁵⁵

The pattern of distribution of ancestral halls is affected by many variables, and is quite uneven. Many of these halls would have been targets of attack after the establishment of the Peoples Republic in 1949, and especially during the Cultural Revolution. Some ancestral halls, though by no means all, have survived from the Song and Ming in early villages where a particular lineage still lives. Other halls may have been built over the Ming and Qing dynasties to celebrate the success of a lineage member in the imperial exams, or when a lineage decided to form new branch organizations. One can still detect a concentration of lineage halls around Huangshi town on the southern irrigated plain, the site of the ancestral villages of the Fourteen Surnames in the Song dynasty.

Although ancestral halls are not found in most villages, almost every village on the Putian plain has one or more *gucuo* 古厝 (ancestral old homes), where limited ancestral worship can take place. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of villagers still identify themselves in terms of lineage, and are ritually active to varying extents in different levels of

⁵⁵ Note that some of these villages no longer have lineage halls.

ancestral worship (in the home through offerings of rice and incense to immediate ancestors, in offerings presented in the *gucuo* to more remote ancestors, and in more elaborate seasonal sacrifices held in ancestral halls in their own villages where these exist to the founding Fujian ancestors and a long succession of ancestors).

Nonetheless, the scarcity of active ancestral halls calls for further explanation. Only a handful of these halls are now called *jiamiao* 家廟 (family temple), a term originally used for the ancestral ritual prerogatives of high officials, even though we have seen that there were more than enough officials produced by the villages of the Putian plains in the Song and Ming to generate a large number of such halls. If the assigning of tax farming responsibilities to the local lineages under the revised *lijia* taxation system in the mid-Ming had led to the fixing in place of the lineages as an intermediary, mediating and controlling strata between State and society (as envisioned in Freedman's (1970) vision of the Chinese lineage), then one would expect the lineage halls to dominate the villages of the Putian plain. By comparison, in the Fuzhou area studied by Szonyi (2002) temples often rival the lineage halls in grandeur, but the latter are still the most impressive local structures in the villages. In the Pearl River delta studied by Faure (2007) lineage halls are usually the pre-eminent structures found in the villages. By contrast, on the Putian plain we find lineage expressed primarily through temple ritual, with different lineages represented by different deities, and mixed surname groups also represented by the cult of a particular god in a multi-god temple. These village temples greatly outnumber lineage halls, and the higher order temples are the most magnificent building complexes on the plain.

Many factors led to this situation. The pirate invasions of the 1550s and 1560s, the Qing Manchu invasion and the Zheng Chenggong counterattacks of the 1640s, along with the coastal evacuation from 1660 to 1680 all added up to over a hundred years of disruption of local society. The traces of these traumatic events can still be seen in the villages "beyond the limit", where powerful lineages are relatively rare. Nonetheless, local society gradually regrouped, and coastal trade resumed in the 17th century and grew in the 18th and early 19th century (Ng 1990). Many powerful lineages consolidated their hold on specific villages and in some cases, on clusters of villages, in the mid-Qing. Overall however, despite, or perhaps in response to, a sustained period of relative prosperity in the mid to late Qing, the lineage underwent significant integration with local territorial temple networks.

One of the most important sources of pressure on village life and lineage organization was the surge in population over the Ming and especially in the mid to late Qing. Population figures for Putian are notoriously suspect (because of their connection with frequently and ingeniously evaded taxes).

Table 3: Population of Putian County

| Date | Households | Individuals | Population |
|--------------------|------------|-------------|-----------------|
| 1391 (Hongwu 24) | 51,151 | | Approx. 200,000 |
| 1452 (Jingtai 3) | 36,009 | | 102,419 |
| 1492 (Hongzhi 5) | 26,941 | | 165,480 |
| 1552 (Jiajing 31) | 25,821 | | 166,730 |
| 1562 (Jiajing 41) | 25,855 | | 147,316 |
| 1612 (Wanli 40) | 25,855 | | 148,756 |
| 1756 (Qianlong 20) | | 71,750 | |
| 1829 (Daoguang 9) | 84,263 | | 394,997 |
| 1937 | | | 617,753 |
| 1949 | | | 691,525 |
| 1990 | | | 1,508,210 |

The figures for Hongwu 24 (1391) are 51,151 registered households with approximately 200,000 people in Putian county. The county was divided into four urban zones and 31 *li* sub-cantons, which were further divided into 294 *tu*, each of which was supposed to have had 110 households. However, by Jingtai 3 (1452) the number of registered households had dropped to 36,009, with the overall population given as 102,419. This sharp decline appears to have been the result of efforts to evade the demands of the *lijia* tax system, along with other tax and corvée requirements of the early Ming. Figures for Hongzhi 5 (1492) are 26,941 households with 165,480 individuals. Sixty years later, in Jiajing 31 (1552), the figures are 25,851 households with 166,730 individuals. The population decline caused by the capture of Putian city in 1562 is revealed in Jiajing 41 (1562), where 25,855 households are reported with only 147,316 individuals, a sharp drop of almost 20,000 people in ten years time. Figures from Wanli 40 (1612) show little improvement, with 25,855 households with 148,756 individuals.

Early Qing figures show only 60,886 “individuals” registered for the new head tax registered in 1661, rising slightly to 71,750 in Qianlong 20 (1756). These figures represent the change from the *lijia* system of tax on population to the later Qing system of tax on landholdings reg-

istered under the name of an individual. In fact, the “individual” was often a lineage which was responsible for raising the required tax on the account. There was clearly rapid and sustained population growth over the mid to late Qing, for in the Daoguang 9 (1829) tax roles there is a registration figure of 84,263 households with 394,997 individuals. These much higher population figures were also the result of the imposition of a *baojia* mutual security system on the villages of Putian, and thus represent a more up to date survey of local conditions. The population rose very rapidly in the Republican period, to 617,753 in 1937, and then to 691,525 in 1949. By 1990 the population had more than doubled, rising to 1,508,210. Population growth led to considerable emigration from Putian to Southeast Asia in the late 19th century. Lineages such as the Huang of Shiting at this time began to change into a transnational corporation (see Chapters 8 and 9 below).

Another fundamental reason for the transformation of the lineage form in the Putian plains over this period has to do with the nature of the local irrigation system. The system is extraordinarily complex and interconnected. Salt water enters deep into the plain on the rising tide, pushing up the Mulan river to the Mulan Weir, located southwest of Putian city. The Weir diverts fresh water descending from the mountains into the Southern and Northern Irrigated plains. Fresh water also follows the retreat of brackish seawater back into the Xinghua bay during low tide. Sluice gates situated in several points along the banks of the Mulan river are opened and closed twice daily in time with the tides of the sea. Thus for several hours of the day, the irrigation channels function as temporary reservoirs. Water is released from these temporary reservoirs during low tide. Such a system requires cooperation and maintenance all along the length of its major channels and secondary and tertiary canals, and at each of its sluice gates. This irrigation system is also extremely sensitive to excess rainfall and to surging tides brought on by storms or typhoons. There are frequent floods along many sections of the irrigation system, which in fact restore some nutrients to the soil if they are not too long lasting or extreme. Thus the system had to be well coordinated enough to respond rapidly to changing weather conditions—from typhoons to floods—and to take systemic decisions about responses to changing conditions. This required the development of a highly inter-connected local level management system, based in the higher order temples composed of multiple ritual alliances. This kind of coordination would be difficult for localized lineages to achieve.

The Mulan irrigation system, along with the Yanshou Weir and the Shihua Weir 使華陂 on the Yanshou river, and the Taiping Weir and the Nan'an Weir on the Qiulu river, were all founded with state support in the Tang and Song. Over time, the trend turned to the institutionalization of local control over and management of irrigation, due to the very nature of the system. State input was required periodically for the linking together of many locally initiated reclamation projects into a new dike along the river banks or on the seacoast. State intervention was also needed to respond to floods that would destroy dikes or damage weirs, or to attempt to balance out competing demands over water rights by villages within the irrigated plains during times of drought, or to punish the theft of water by various groups and to attempt to mediate demands and regulate water distribution as equitably as possible. But even at the start of the Mulan irrigation system in the Song, the role of the Fourteen Surnames shows the involvement of local social groups, whatever their actual status may have been at the time.

Different kinds of irrigation systems under different ecological conditions have distinct impacts on local social organization. Thus the high degree of interconnectedness of the Putian irrigated plain led to the spread of a network of ritual alliances rather than to the domination of different lineages over specific parcels of land.⁵⁶ In an expanding delta such as the Pearl River delta studied by Faure (2007), the natural process of formation of sandy islets within the delta provided the perfect opportunity for local groups (many of whom were originally of Dan origin) to claim these lands in the name of a lineage and to adopt the lineage form in order to achieve legitimacy from the state and the official registration of their land claims. Thus the perfect marriage of state Confucian ideology and local needs for official recognition led to a “Confucianization” of local society. Whether this meant that the local temple system became insignificant under the spread of

⁵⁶ Faure (2007) has suggested that the ritual networks of the Putian plains arose in response to the need to maintain the irrigation system. However, his view that these alliances were quite large (equal to a xiang) is not fully borne out by the survey, which finds that many of the alliances are single villages. Of course, the latter may have been isolated elements between larger alliances. In general, the point here is that the entire plain developed these alliances due to the systemic complexity of their interrelations, and that this also required the elaboration of new forms of ritual and new forms of local power.

the lineage form is another question which requires further study (see Liu 1995).

Similarly, the riverine irrigation systems of Shanxi and Henan in northern central China display very different ecological constraints (Bai Erheng, Lang Keli and Wei Peixin, 2003; Dong Xiaoping and Lang Keli, 2003). In these systems, water is increasingly limited, and very carefully distributed and rationed. This requires quite strict regulations with considerable state intervention and policing to ensure compliance. Sometimes unsustainable contradictions and pressures arise from new commercial demands on water for the milling of grain on the one hand, and dwindling water supply and an effort to achieve equitable distribution on the part of the state on the other. The integration of local society into the control functions of the state and the emphasis on morality, compliance, and orthodoxy are prominent features of such irrigation systems. At the same time, scarcity of water leads to a profound proliferation of cults of water gods and rain making deities.

These irrigation systems differ again from those of Taiwan, which for the most part involve water falling rapidly from high mountains into a fairly thin coastal plain and out to the sea. The late date of the colonization and development of Taiwan, in the context of a frontier immigrant society with weak lineages and stronger sub-ethnic identification via temple cults brought from different points in Fujian and Guangdong led to the development of distinct interactions between ecological constraints and social formations. The irrigation systems around the lakes of the Jiangnan region are again another ecological set of conditions. Each of these cases brings together a different mix of elements of state control, ecological constraints, social formations, and historical conditions. In each case, geography plays a strongly constraining (and enabling), if not determining, factor in the evolution of local social forms and in constraining the relations of state and society. Other cultural, social and historical factors ensure indeterminacy and evoke creative local innovations.

Qing lineages in the irrigated Putian plain underwent many transformations. Zheng Zhenman (2001) has suggested a broad tendency of change from what he terms inheritance lineages in the Song, to control-subordination lineages in the Ming, to contractual lineages in the Qing. Of course, he points out that all three kinds of lineages co-existed at any one period. Moreover, he argues that any one lineage is likely to transform over time into these different categories as a communitarian

style lineage with collective property, work, and distribution of goods gradually changes into a control-subordination lineage, either through the accumulation of a lineage estate and the growth of a managerial elite, or through the impact of outside success in the examination system or in the merchant realm. Finally, these powerful lineages often found it irresistible to diversify, opening themselves to capitalist forces and turning into joint-stock corporations in which outsiders (in terms of kinship) could buy shares. Zheng goes on to show that contractual lineages could transform back into control-subordination lineages, and that under some circumstances, these too could transform back into inheritance lineages. His transformative structural model extends below the level of the lineage all the way to the nuclear family, with important implications for ritual activity at each level. The point we seek to emphasize here is that the lineages of Putian were constantly changing, in relation to classical models, in relation to one another and to external forces of the state (examinations) and the market, and internally over time. Particularly in certain areas such as the *jiawai* villages that suffered evacuation in the early Qing, the tendency was for the contractual lineage model to dominate in the rebuilding of local society, as different groups fought over land rights and resources.

But even in the established, long settled villages of the inner Putian plain, other forces led to a weakening of the dominant lineage model. These included the movement of many lineage elites into Putian city in the high Qing, leaving their village centers open to more fluid formations based in temple committees. As more lineages diversified into merchant activity in the late Qing, more and more adopted in sons to send to Southeast Asia on a sink or swim speculative model of trans-national networking. The declining number of *Jinshi* and *Juren* in Qing Putian has been cited as an indication of the decline of the region over the Qing dynasty (Vermeer 1990), but this could be taken to imply that attaining official office was the only significant sign of success. Increasing population, diversification of lineage activities, rising merchant activity including a concentration on coastal shipping and smuggling, along with a wide range of local avenues to pursue Confucian values in everyday life (such as the Three in One), all contributed to a period of sustained growth on the Putian plains. At the same time, the spread of literacy, along with decreasing chances for official positions, led many local literati to turn their interests and their efforts towards local society. The trend towards localism in certain schools of Qing Confucian practical statecraft teaching also encouraged a closer

integration of local elites and local society.⁵⁷ The temple networks of the regional ritual alliances became an important venue where educated elites could develop their talents and expand their connections. These temple committees also doubled as chambers of commerce, and many *shenminghui* 神明會 (loan associations guaranteed by oaths to the gods) formed within them. In the high Qing, these regional temple networks would have maintained intimate links with the great temples within Putian City, including the City God temple, whose grand procession was a major event in local cultural life.

The following image of Putian city is taken from the (Qianlong) *Putian xianzhi*. Note the walls around the city, with the four directional gates, and the irrigation canals running along the sides and through the center of the city. Inside the city walls, one sees represented government offices, Confucian schools, public granaries, military barracks, the Chenghuangmiao 城隍廟 (City God temple), the centers of the Buddhist and Daoist Supervision Offices (the Yongfusi 永福寺 and the Wanshougong 萬壽宮 respectively), the temple to Mazu 媽祖 or Tianhou 天后, the Wenfenggong 文峰宮, and other temples and monasteries, including the great Buddhist Guanghuasi 廣化寺 outside the city walls. Notice also the Wushishan 烏石山 hill at the north of the city. Here Lin Zhao'en established his Zongkongtang 宗孔堂 in the late Ming to spread his Three in One teachings. What is not shown in the image are the many lanes and alleys filled with shops and homes, and the great lineage halls of most of the major lineages of the Putian plains.

As mentioned above, Zheng Zhenman (2001) has outlined a dynamic typology of family-lineage forms leading to a range of lineage structures which he calls hereditary, control-subordination, and contractual. In the Putian plains, many of the larger control-subordination lineages of the gradually transformed into contractual lineages in the mid to late Qing. These lineages resembled joint stock corporations. Membership could be obtained by the purchase of shares in the lineage corporation. Similar commercialization can be seen in the ritual associations as well. Several contracts for purchase of membership in a *shê* ritual association survive from late Qing Putian. The following document shows that membership in such associations could be purchased, and

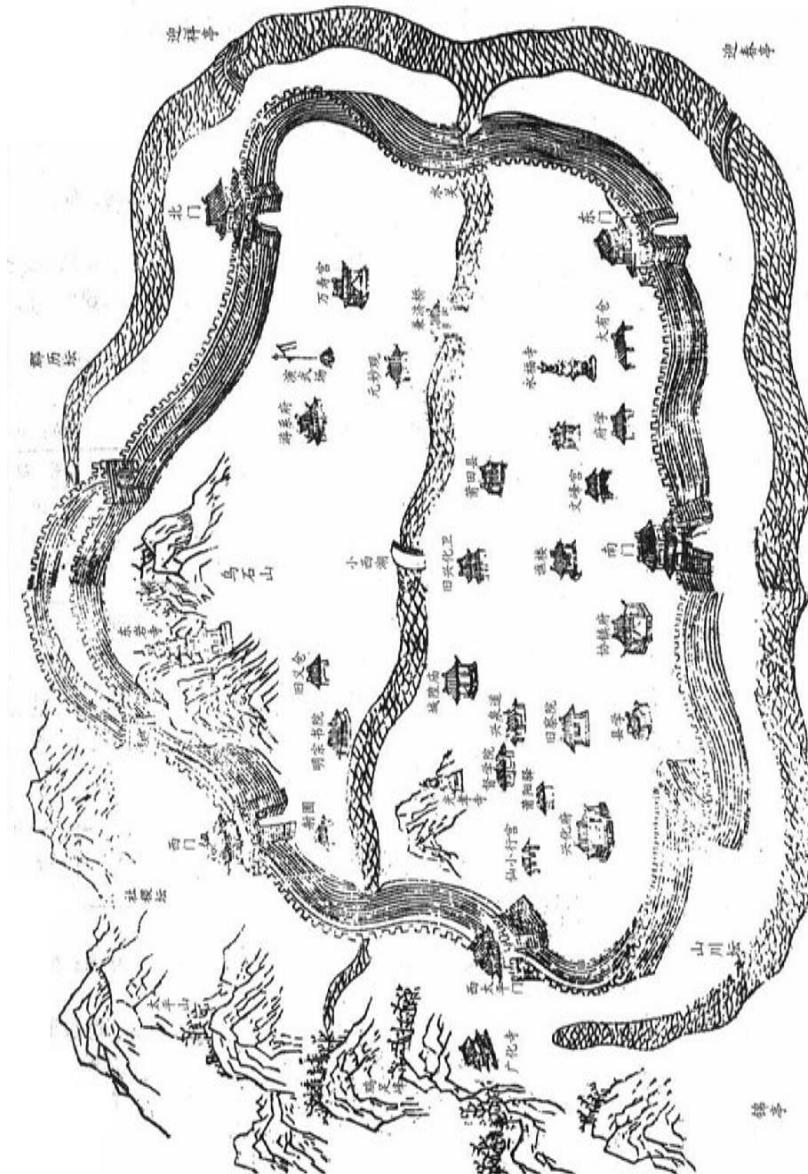
⁵⁷ For earlier Neo-Confucian interest in localism, see Bol (1993).

presumably gave the owner rights, responsibilities and some kind of standing in the local community:

The seller of the share in the *shê*, Dong Changshou, having in hand a share in the assembly of the altar of the earth (*shêhui yi gu* 社會一股), originally belonging to the sacrifice to the lord of the earth at Qianyang qianfang. Today, because it is no longer of use to me, I entrust Zhongyi to take my share in the *shê* and sell it to (Wu) Chunguan of Wuzhai (village). He shall go forward to (have his name) inscribed in the register and hear it recited. Today after discussion with a mediator, all three parties have agreed to set the price at 4.000 coppers exactly. This amount has been received in person, and it is complete. Both buyer and seller do this out of their own good will, neither having pressured the other or forced one another, and neither has cheated the other in the transaction. From the time of this sale, we rely upon the Wu party to use this contract as a basis to go ahead and collect rent from within (the *shê*) in rotation. It has been decided on the day of the meeting that should the Dong party wish, whether now or in the future, early or late, to use the original price to redeem the sale, this will not be obstructed by the Wu side. Having spoken first and then agreed, let no one regret this later. Wishing now to have a proof of this agreement, we write this contract for the sale of a share in the *shê* to witness it.⁵⁸

Commercial associations gathered in major temples during the Qing. In 1739, the 興安會館 Xingan Huiguan (commercial association) was established, and their first act was to build a new Tianhou temple in Hanjiang. This was a fairly loosely organized association, made up of many different trades all gathered together under the protection of the goddess Mazu. Two inscriptions still standing in the temple, dated 1750 and 1753, show that one group of forty shipping merchants had formed a god association called the *Dongouhui* and invested in three rental properties to raise funds for sacrificial rites. Every year eight *shanghao* 商號 (companies) took charge of the sacrifices in a five year rotation cycle. Another group of twenty-four prosperous merchants formed a god association simply called the *xiangdeng hui* 香燈會 (incense and oil lamp association), which also kept two rental properties which brought in 26,000 cash each year. The members of the

⁵⁸ Cited from a late Qing lineage genealogy in Zheng 2000:256–67. See Dean 2003: 104–105 for further discussion of this passage.



[Blockprint Image 2: Putian City from the (Qianlong) Putian Xianzhi, pp. 38-39.]

association were divided into four groups, which rotated the sacrificial duties between them.⁵⁹

By 1807, the 興安會館 Xingan commercial association within the Tianhou Temple had strengthened considerably. According to a stele still in the temple which officially prohibits a neighboring kiln from polluting the temple, Hanjiang was a major commercial port, and much of the business of the town was carried out inside the Tianhou temple. The Huiguan consisted of an association of ten trades. They maintained the temple and paid for Buddhist monks to carry out rituals. The temple was hugely popular with the local people, who came regularly seeking the blessings of the goddess. Important visiting officials came to present incense to the goddess, and were received by the leaders of the commercial association.⁶⁰

The Xingan Huiguan continued to grow in power through the 19th century, and was involved in irrigation projects, the training of *tuanlian* self-defense troops, and the building of temples. In 1870, one Huang Bangjie 黃邦杰 proposed to restore the temple and establish a new temple committee, with the funding coming from “profits on the sale of goods”. The committee included forty different *shanghao* companies, each of whom contributed different amounts from a thousand to over five million cash, depending on their sales. This was no longer a system of voluntary contributions, but a territorial temple system with established, fixed rates of mandatory contributions. As the still extant stele in the Hanjiang Tianhou Temple from 1876 states, “The merchants of Putian lead the way in shipping throughout the Wu Yue area (Southeast China), and in their buying and selling, importing and exporting, they all gather in Hanjiang. Thus buyers and sellers all meet

⁵⁹ *Chifeng huguo bimin hongren puji Tianhou shengmu Dongouhui beiji* 敕封護國庇民弘仁普濟天后聖母東甌會碑記 (Stele recording the Dongou Association of the [Hanjiang Temple] of the Saintly Mother, Empress of Heaven, Imperially enfeoffed as Protector of the State, Protector of the People, of Vast Humaneness, and Universal Salvation) and the *Xingan huiguan xiangdenghui beiji* 興安會館香燈會碑記 (Stele recording the Incense and Oil lamp Association of the Xingan Commercial Association), in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 201, pp. 231–233, and No. 210, pp. 242–244. See also Zheng 2006.

⁶⁰ *Hanjiang Tianhougong feng xian shijinbei* 涵江天后宮奉憲示禁碑 (Stele announcing an official decree of prohibition at the Hanjiang Temple of the Empress of the Heaven), *ibid.*, 1995: No. 234, pp. 269–270.

together in Hanjiang, and this is the very reason that the Hanjiang Huiguan was established.”⁶¹

Many of these newly emerging merchant associations in the mid to late Qing adopted Xuantian shangdi or Tianshang shengmu as their patron god, as can be seen in the distribution of the cult of these gods in the Jiangkou area, which only became prosperous in the late Qing (see maps of distributions of gods below). Another feature of sustained economic security was a rapid increase in population, leading to the founding of many new villages at the end of the Qing (see *Map 9: Village Foundation Date by Dynasty* in the *Color Plates*). Within older villages, one notes the spreading out of lineages into mixed-surname neighborhoods and their increasingly complex participation in multi-god temple cults.

The High Qing marks a turning point in court attitudes towards lay initiatory religious movements. Increasing suspicion and pressure from the court frequently led to persecutions which in turn led to rebellions. A lay Buddhist *zhaijiao* 魘醮 rebellion in northern Fujian was put down in 1748 (Seiwert: 2003:251). Inside Putian, the Three in One and other similar groups were forced to go underground for several decades during the Qianlong period (1736–95). During this time, many Three in One temples changed their names from *Tang* 堂 (Hall) to *Shuyuan* 書院 (Academy) to avoid official suspicion. Nonetheless, the groundwork was laid for the rapid expansion of these networks at the end of the Qing.

The Qianlong period was also a turning point in court attitudes towards Daoism, with the Celestial Masters of Longhushan being demoted and eventually (in the Daoguang period) being refused access to the court. There appears to have been a growing suspicion of the close relationship between Daoist ritual masters and local ritual alliances. Despite this attitude, this period was a long, prosperous, and secure era, and local temples were built in large numbers in the Putian plains.

One fairly new phenomenon beginning in the 18th century was the formation of higher order lineages combining several residentially dis-

⁶¹ *Chongxiu Xingan huiguan beiji* 重修興安會館碑記 (Stele recording the repair of the Xingan Commercial Association), in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 296, pp. 331–333.

persed lineages of the same surname.⁶² For example, the *Corporate Register of the Great Descent Hall of the Huang of Xianxi* (1934) refers to the construction of this hall in 1734, and states:

Among us of the Huang surname in Xianyou, some have come from the provincial capital, some arrived from Putian, some have moved from Quanzhou. But, simply speaking, all of us originated in Jiangxi [in Hubei]. So, based on the imperative to treat kin as kin, we have constructed a Great Descent-Line Hall in the county town, to sacrifice to (Huang) Yuanfang, the Prefect of Jinjiang Prefecture in the Jin period; (Huang) Shougong, a respected man of his prefecture in the Jin; (Huang) An, the prefect of Guizhou 貴州, enfeoffed as state-establishing Duke in the Tang, and Investigating Censor (Huang) Tao. Beneath them are installed ancestral tablets according to contributions. Property has been purchased for the annual sacrifices. This hall is known as the Hall of Respectful Inheritance (Jingchengtang), to reflect the deep significance of respecting the ancestors and uniting the descent-line. (Zheng, 2001: 318–19, trans. M. Szonyi).

By 1933 this hall contained 542 ancestral tablets, divided among six branches, and covering members dispersed in over one hundred towns and villages across Xianyou county. It cost twelve taels to add another tablet to the shrine. Similarly, the Great Descent-Line Hall of the Lin of Xianyou contained over twelve hundred ancestral tablets of sub-lineage groups spread throughout the county in the early 20th century, and these were divided into groupings of twelve shares of one hundred tablets each, each of which were responsible for the sacrifices in rotation.

These higher-order lineage formations relate to increasing contradictions in local society. Chen Shengshao 陳盛韶 noted in the Daoguang period that: “In Xianyou the small surnames fear the large surnames more than they fear the officials. What are they afraid of? With a single call, supporters [of the large surname] respond from all directions, and they prepare to do battle...At first, the large surnames oppressed the small surnames, so the small surnames combined the different surnames into a single surname in order to resist them” (Zheng, 2001:239–40). This passage shows that large surnames could still dominate areas under their control in the late Qing, especially in

⁶² One such group had already begun forming in the Ming Chongzhen period. Huang from all over Putian county met at that time to discuss repairing the ancestral hall in Huang Xiang. See Zheng Zhenman, 2001:229.

the inland valleys of Xianyou. The general tendency in the late Qing on the Putian plain was for an abstraction from territorial connections of lineage relations, which then reconnected at a higher level in order to advance collective economic, political or social interests at the county-wide level.

In general, the low-lying, fertile, and well-watered lands of the entire Putian plain had been filled in with village settlements quite completely by the late Ming (16th century). The only area available for the founding of new villages was in inland foothills of the mountain ranges that ring the plain, and areas beyond the boundaries of the Qing coastal evacuations. *Map 9: Village Foundation Date by Dynasty* (see *Color Plates*) is based on survey information, and may include some errors. The villages marked as Ming villages were already settled in the Hongzhi 弘治 period (early 1500s), and some of them no doubt date back to the Song. Note that the late Qing villages are clustered either in the area beyond the coastal evacuation, or inland, in hilly areas around the plain which were sparsely populated. These villages were only established after the better land on the plains was completely occupied.

One can locate on the *Map 9: Village Foundation Date by Dynasty* several ritual alliances in which a single Ming village is surrounded by several mid-Qing or late Qing villages, indicating a pattern of village expansion through the development of satellite villages over time. The survey reveals that these villages were often linked in an alliance around a shared *gushê* 古社 (ancient altar of the soil) based in the Ming village.

Some of the more recent villages may have been populated by emigrants from the Minnan region to the south of Xinghua. A number of local gazetteers and lineage genealogies confirm that there was substantial immigration into the Xinghua region from the Minnan region to the south during the late Ming and early Qing, as the entire coast was disrupted by pirate invasions and the Qing coastal evacuation. Traces of Minnan immigration can be found in the distribution of deities worshipped in the Minnan area, such as Guangze zunwang and Baosheng Dadi (also known as Ciji zhenren; see Dean 1993 for further discussion of these gods and their founding temples). Note that the villages along the sea-dikes did not split off to form new villages, but they did stretch out quite far along the irrigation canals of the area to absorb rising populations of villagers and emigrants.

Although beyond the scope of this study, it would be possible to develop a rudimentary village morphology, based on village shapes,

size and population, as well as proximity to irrigation canals, and the presence of market streets within some larger villages. The average population of the villages on the Putian plain is currently around 1,000 residents. The average land of each village is around 0.6 sq. km. 1000 residents appears to represent one kind of limit in terms of average population to land ratio. After that point, it is likely that satellite villages were formed, or else other external resources were absorbed into the village, allowing it to break through this limit, and grow in size into a trading center. These external resources might have included success in the imperial examinations, but no doubt also included economic diversification into handicrafts, trade, smuggling, and the development of export goods such as dried *longyan*.

Most villages on the Putian plain stretch along a canal or extend between two or more canals. Lines of houses, often built side by side, stretch along these canals. Over time, additional rows of houses are added, and public space is set aside for the temples and their courtyards. On an open plain, a village may take a more circular shape. Older, larger villages develop paved market streets on central lanes. The relatively recent rise of roads and automotive transport has shifted the morphology of villages considerably, with new shops lining the roadways, often at some distance from the older center of the village.⁶³

Late Qing rise of feuding alliances

The late Qing in Putian was marked by the rise of feuding banner alliances (white, black, and red (neutral)) of associated villages. *Map 11: of Feuding Banner Alliances of the Putian Plain in the late Qing (19th century)* (see *Color Plates*), shows the distribution of regional factions who fought over water rights as imperial power declined in the last half of the 19th century. Most of these divide up along regional alliance lines, but some alliances were internally divided at this time. These groupings fought primarily over water-rights, but the fighting could be provoked by the theft of a chicken, a buffalo grazing in a neighboring village field, or rude behavior to village women. Generally the scale of these fights was small, involving at most a handful of villages on each side. Some of these fights took on ritualized forms, with

⁶³ See Roberts (1987) for comparative research into English village morphology.

regular occasions for the hurling of stones back and forth. This recalls an episode we witnessed in 2005 when two processions of gods, each claiming the same territory, collided near the Meizhou 湄洲 ferry on the Xiuyu peninsula. In that case, stones flew until the sky was black, and the two sides pushed and shoved until a few people drew blood and the police intervened, arresting a few from each side, after which the procession turned back. The rise of these fragmented segmentary alliances in the late Qing was linked to the decline of central power under foreign and domestic (Taiping Tianguo 太平天國) attack and the pressure of a rapidly expanding population on gradually collapsing irrigation systems. Without broader temple alliance supervision, and the threat of local government intervention, the irrigation system was wide open to local abuse.

Local legend links the banner associations to god cults, with the black banner supposedly representing Zhanggong and the white banner Mazu. But the actual situation was far more complex, with the irrigation systems breaking up into battling units in a checkerboard formation (see *Map 11: Feuding Banner Alliances of the Putian Plain in the late Qing (19th century)*). Only occasionally did these rival groupings manage to coalesce into a regional alliance. This occurred midway through the 19th century, during the rebellion of Lin Jun 林俊, which coincided with the Xiaodaohui 小刀會 rebellion in Xiamen and the Taiping rebellion in central China and in Nanjing. Lin Jun was able to unite the white and black alliances of the Xinghua area to join him in ambushing Qing forces, and in attacking Putian city in 1853 (*Shejibian*, j. 2.1a–3.16b).

A second coalition of banner associations took place in the Republican period, when Huang Lian 黃濂 (1862–1913), known as the 16th Emperor, gathered forces on Hugongshan 壺公山 Mountain. His troops laid siege to Putian city and briefly took Xianyou city in 1912. Local legend claims that he drew support from his connections with the “secret religions” such as the Guanmenjiao 關門教 (also known as the Jintangjiao, see below).⁶⁴ It is clear that there had been a long division between the villages of the thirty-six village alliance of the Hugongshan Mountains, which draw water for limited irrigation from

⁶⁴ The story of Huang Lian is recounted in Zhang Zhongshu, 張仲舒 *Shiliu huangdi xiaoshi* 十六皇帝小史 (Minor history of the Sixteenth Emperor), n.d. See also Madancy (1995, 2003).

the mountain streams, and the villages of the lands well irrigated by the Mulan irrigation in the Southern irrigated plain. The latter had always been the site of strong lineages with many literati and members of the local Putian elite, while the villages of the thirty-six village alliance were markedly poorer and had far less access to elite status.

An interesting cultural reaction to this increasing fragmentation and rising inter-village violence was the spread of the *Tanban* spirit medium altar associations in the Jiuliang irrigation system around Jiangkou and in the northern reaches of the Northern Irrigated Putian plain. Ritual aspects of this tradition will be discussed below (see *Ritual Specialists: Tanban*). The rituals marking the completion of the training sessions of a new generation of spirit mediums drew many neighboring villages together in networks of ritual exchange, counterbalancing to some degree the internecine fighting of the black and white alliances (Dean and Zheng 1993).

Republican period defense of local cults

During the Republican period, local cults and local ritual traditions came under considerable pressure from the Republican government. The campaign to suppress popular religion was part of the New Life campaign (Duara 1995, Neodstrup 2008). The origins of this anti-clerical and anti-religious movement, linked to the modernist drive to secularization, have been traced back to figures such as Kang You-wei 康有為 writing in the 1890's (Goossaert 2003). As Robert Weller has remarked, the secularization of China was simultaneously the "religionization" of China, that is to say the imposition of a new definition of religion as something opposed to the secular upon local ritual traditions.⁶⁵ Several sources reveal the efforts of local temple committees and local literati to defend the cult centers of Putian. Zhang Qin 張琴, the last Putian *jinshi* (Metropolitan Candidate), and the author of the 1945 manuscript edition of the *Putian xianzhi*, composed the *Kaoli zhengsu baocun shenshè shuotie* (*Memorial on the investigation of the rites and orthodox customs calling for the preservation of the temples of the gods*) in response to government anti-popular religion movements in the 1920's:

⁶⁵ Comments made at the *Conference on Religion and Modernity*, U.C. Santa Barbara, 2007.

The current government has ordered the destruction of licentious cults. It has established a set of regulations as a standard for the preservation of temples. These regulations are based on religion, philosophy, and the acts of merit before the people performed by the former saints, sages, and heroes. The intent of this is deep indeed. There are many licentious cults in Putian, but if one examines the essence of their intentions then few indeed are those that transgress against the [new] regulations. I have investigated the transmission, errors, transgressions, truth and falsity of these cults, basing my study on the *[Book] of Rites*, the *[Five] Classics*, the dynastic histories, and the commentaries [to the *Annals of the Spring and Autumn Period*]. Probing to the heart of the matter, I have extracted information that demonstrates their accordance with the regulations for the preservation [of cults]... The [common] people established *shè* altars when the *fengjian* 封建 [feudal] system collapsed. Looking at it from this perspective, it is clear the *shè* is the harbinger of the development of the people's self-government. Because of the antiquity of the *shè*, Master Zhu [Xi] in the Song dynasty established the *shèxué* 社學 (communal academies) and *shècang* 社倉 (communal granaries). These advanced and became self-governing collectivities (*zizhi tuanti* 自治團體). Even today the remnants of these institutions have not disappeared... After the Song, the worship of city gods spread throughout the empire. Some were given [official] temple plaques and some were given titles of enfeoffment, while some were by association given particular surnames and personal names, which borders on the non-canonical. However, if we recognize that the *shè* altar is the site where the gods of the soil and the grains are worshipped, then the name is correct and the terms accord, and nothing can be in doubt. Because the city god is the *shè* altar of the soil of the prefecture or district, the people's prayers and thanksgiving are first and foremost directed towards his temple. Now the prefectural [city god] temple of Putian each year donates several thousand *shi* (stones) of rice to save the poor. These are all merciful families who voluntarily donate [food]. There is no forcible raising of contributions. Their achievements are impressive.

Zhang Qin makes several adroit moves in these citations. He links the *shè* altars to the tradition of self-government and self-sufficiency and argues that they are a school for democratic rights. He further argues that temples such as the Prefectural City God Temple at the head of the hierarchy of the temples of the Putian plains are charitable organizations dedicated to the good of all the citizens of the city. In his introduction he suggests that popular worship at the village temples should be understood as a form of "freedom of belief". He seamlessly blends the discourse of the classics with the language of political reform of the Republican modernizers. These arguments indicate that local ritual practices had broad support in elite circles in Putian. It

comes as no surprise that Zhang Qin's parents were active members of the Three in One movement, and that he was quite familiar with the teachings of Lin Zhao'en.

Another example of a document defending local temples from government efforts at appropriation, is the 1932 *Lin Xiaonu sidian Sangong Denxianshangjing guipu* 林孝女祀典三宮登賢上境規譜 (*Register of the regulations of the Three [Goddess] Temple of the Upper Ascending to Sagehood Ritual Territory for the Ritual Observances dedicated to the Filial Lady Lin*) [Mo, i.e., Mazu].⁶⁶ This document was composed in response to efforts on the part of the “Revolutionary” (i.e., Republican) government to ban licentious cults and destroy or take over temple buildings. In this case, the goddess Mazu was redefined as Xiaonu Lady Lin, an exemplar of filial piety, in an effort to place her in the context of the cultural nationalist traditionalism of one sector of the Republican government. The document goes on to explains that due to pressure from the Revolutionary (Republican) government, the *yuanxiao* processions of the temple had stopped for some time, and that, as a result, considerable amounts of temple lands and rents had fallen into private hands. The situation had relaxed by 1921, and it was possible to once again celebrate the *yuanxiao* procession and the feast of the *shè* association. The document was printed and distributed in order to force people to return temple property and to get everyone to adhere to a new set of regulations (discussed in more detail in Dean, 1995).

A stone inscription from 1922 in the Jiangkou Dongyueguan 東嶽觀 brings our focus back to the continuing power of the temple alliances during the Republican period:

Although Fujian borders the sea, yet the power of the spirits has truly displayed its dependability. The Dongyueguan Temple of the Eastern Peak was established near the Brocade River (in Jiangkou) in the Yuan dynasty, some five hundred years ago, and its incense fire is the most resplendent in all of Putian. As for the [god's] driving away disasters and resolving adversities, and invisibly creating good fortune for the people, such matters are too numerous to tell. When it comes to resolving difficulties and settling disputes, extolling the good and vilifying the evil,

⁶⁶ This name change was in fact mandated for all Mazu temples in the county by the KMT government and was approved and implemented by the Fujian Provincial government in 1928 (Dean 1995).

then [the god's] authority truly is able to fill in those areas beyond the reach of local officials and *yamen* runners.⁶⁷

Some movements such as the Three in One attempted to go along with the flow of modernization as much as possible, introducing scientific language into their descriptions of their techniques of self-cultivation.

Finally, a quote from Mao Zedong's *Report from Xunwu* [a village of 4700 people in southwest Jiangxi, which was written in 1930, and surveys village class relations and local organizations in Southeast China. Mao has an interesting perspective on the political features of the *shê* temples:

A community (*shê*) has a kind of community shrine (*shêtan*) that is different from a shrine association. Every village has one. Even if a village has three families, there is a community shrine. Why do they want a community shrine? To ensure that their crops are not devoured by insects and that their livestock do not get sick, and to ensure the health of the people. Every community has an association. From the beginning of February to the end of October, there is a meeting each month. The meeting is usually scheduled for the second, but in some places it is on the sixteenth. On the day of the meeting, one person from each family in the community comes. Rich or poor, all have a share. A pig is killed and wine purchased for a big feast. After the feast, a meeting is held to discuss affairs like building terraces and water channels, prohibiting livestock from harming fields, and prohibiting careless use of wooded areas. The regulations are numerous, and everyone has his say. Also, there is no chairman; nor is any record [of the proceedings] desired. The discussions are chaotic, but there is a kind of natural order. So when the so-called elders or the enlightened ones voice a reasonable view, then everyone says their words have "been spoken well." [When this happens], a decision has been made. This community of the masses is very different, even though they believe in gods, from the shrine associations of the rich peasants and landlords. The peasants run this sort of community discussions, not the bullies or the powerful gentry. Nor is it completely run by rich peasants. The informed chairman is a person whose reasonable manner causes people to trust him. Very few community shrines have public halls. In the majority, they hold meetings on the second of every month [to worship the god], everyone contributes money. Each time everyone pays two, three or four mao, but if a person is not going to eat, he doesn't have to pay. As for "temples" (*miao*), they have rooms with images. A temple has a temple caretaker, called a temple elder in

⁶⁷ Dean and Zheng, eds., *Epigraphical Materials*. 1995: No. 327, p. 362.

the local dialect, who is an old man who takes care of the image and tends the lamps and incense. Generally speaking, most temples have land, the rent from which is used to support the temple elder. Elders of the temples without land get their food and sundries from contributions of money and food from the masses...Shine associations are needed by landlords; the community shrines are needed by peasants; temples are needed by both landlords and peasants. The land income of the temples is low, and the rent is not enough to pay for the cost of incense, spirit money, and the needs of the temple elder. These are not places engaging in serious exploitation. (Mao Zedong, *Report from Xunwu*, trans. R. R. Thompson, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990: 126–129.)

Post 1949 developments

The history of Chinese local ritual traditions after 1949 and especially during the Cultural Revolution has yet to be written. The following brief comments are intended only to sketch out the main twists and turns of this period. Despite Mao's favorable remarks about the community *shê* temples in Southeast China, the CCP was determined to attack entrenched local power structures such as lineages and monasteries, and local temples soon became objects of attack as well. Monastic lands and lineage estates were redistributed during the Land Reform movement of the 1950s. This process accelerated during the Cultural Revolution.

In 1950, local branches of the Buddhist Association were established, political study groups were set up, and Buddhist organizations made donations to the government. Christian adherents were asked to sign onto the new threefold policy of self governing, self supporting, and self-transmitting churches. In 1951 large scale denunciation meetings were held against those religious figures who had received foreign funding. Many Christians contributed funds to the Korean War, and many joined the army. In 1952 work teams entered the main Buddhist monasteries and established supervisory committees and restructured workloads so the monks could be self-sufficient. Over the next six months a series of instructions on how to handle the religious sector were issued. In 1953 a full scale registration of the 664 Buddhist monasteries, temples and halls, and their landholdings was carried out, and 1,672 Buddhist monks and nuns were registered. Christian groups organized an exhibition illustrating the new religious policies and the manipulation of religion by foreign imperialist forces. After an investigation of the level of counter-revolutionary imperialist activity

in Christian circles, the churches were allowed to carry out religious services again.

In 1954 the first struggle sessions were held against Christians accused of aiding imperialist forces. Buddhist groups again made a large donation to the state. In a major sermon, an elderly minister urged his fellow Christian to obey the laws of the state. In 1955 a committee of the Pan-Religious groups of Putian was established (although without Daoist or popular cult representatives). In 1956 a series of religious sites were declared cultural relics under the protection of the county. Political study sessions were imposed on 120 Christians, and two members were declared counter-revolutionary and arrested. Churches were closed down, and many members were declared to be "rightists". The Protestant True Jesus church was banned, and its members were dispersed, and many were arrested. During this same year, Putian Buddhist circles underwent political study sessions as well, and sent representatives to the national conference of Buddhist leaders in 1957, where one of them presided over national meetings the following year.

In 1958 and 1959 new regulations called for the streamlining or merging of religious sites, in effect, calling for the destruction or closing of many of these sites. Authorized Catholic sites went from seventeen to two. Of the 426 Christian sites in Putian prior to 1949, thirty-six had been restored, but only twelve were permitted to remain. Buddhist sites went from 656 to only fifteen, not counting the seventy-five that were torn down. Religious leaders were assigned to political study sessions and underwent enforced agricultural labor. The leading policy of the time was to "extinguish religion in as short a time as possible". This led to the reduction of temple lands, the demolishing of temples and churches, the enforced return to lay life of Buddhist monks and nuns, the holding of public lectures on atheism and the non-existence of spirits, and the razing of the tombs of Christian missionaries. In late 1959, however, twenty-four monks were allowed to travel to their branch monasteries in Southeast Asia. In 1960 Buddhist monks and nuns were once again registered and monastic farms were inspected. Some Buddhist monks were singled out for corruption.

In 1961 policy again softened somewhat and a call was issued to ensure that religious groups had free access to sites of religious worship, as some foreign imperialists were claiming that they were being persecuted. More sites were placed under the protection of the cultural relics program, including some churches. But in 1962 attacks against

the counter-revolutionary tendencies of Catholics were made in the Central Committee. In 1963 a report was issued on the counter-revolutionary activities of a (small number) of Christians in the Putian region. As a result, several Catholic leaders were assigned landlord status and denounced as rightists. With the launch of the Socialist Education Campaign, religious objects and manuscripts in temples, monasteries and private collections were gathered and destroyed. In 1965 an order was issued to tear down most temples and monasteries and to give their lands and valuables to the nearby collective farms. Monks and nuns were forcibly returned to the lay sphere. Another exhibition was held by the Patriotic Religious Association, but this time the main exhibits were bad people and evil deeds within the religious sphere. Public Security investigative teams were dispatched to the Christian communities in Pinghai and Nanri townships, and they issued a report on the four purifications campaign (of ideology, economics, organization, and behavior).

In May of 1966 the Cultural Revolution broke out. Attacks were mounted against “revisionism”, and religion was declared to be extinct and relegated to the museum of history. Religious leaders were denounced as “cow demons and snake spirits”, and many were oppressed, imprisoned, and died. Bands of Red Guards raided monasteries and destroyed or looted religious objects. In July, the offices of the Patriotic Religious Association were ransacked and taken over by a street revolutionary committee. All the files were burned and dispersed. The last official notice received by the Putian Bureau of Religious Affairs on July 29, 1965 ordered that the Guanghuasi monastery temporarily be spared destruction. Religious figures were paraded through the streets in dunce caps, and sent to labor camps. On Lunar 6/1 of 1965 the Deputy Director of the Putian Buddhist Association, the Buddhist monk Faxin 法心, was forced to commit suicide.

On Sept. 11, 1965, a revolutionary work team took over the Guanghuasi and together with a middle school Red Guard unit began a Cultural Revolution campaign in which the monks were made to study the “Decisions regarding several issues in the Great Cultural Revolution”. They launched the campaign to destroy the Four Olds (old ideology, old culture, old customs, old habits). Intensive struggle sessions were held, and the monks were forced to compose 129 great character posters. Four monks were singled out as cow demons and snake spirits. All the property and bank accounts of the monastery were seized by the work team. A report was issued on the program to

“Return the monks to the lay life”, and the monks were forced to write out “statements of resolve” renouncing their faith, and promising to be good citizens in the collective farms to which they were assigned. On Sept. 28, the Cultural Revolution work team left the Guanghuasi monastery, and moved on to the other major monasteries of Putian. In each one, they repeated the process of calling the monks together, forcing them to eat a bowl of meat soup, and then forcing them to take part in the destruction of the Buddhist images. After that, the monks were forced out of the monasteries and sent back to collective farms. Many Catholics and Protestant leaders were also singled out for attack. Churches were ransacked and little was left behind. Many churches and properties belonging to churches were impounded by communes and collective farms. In May of 1968, the Revolutionary Committee of Putian was established. It would take until March of 1980 for the new Putian Revolutionary Committee to re-establish the Religious Affairs Division.

After the fall of the Gang of Four and the consolidation of the rule of Deng Xiaoping the files of persecuted religious leaders underwent review and rectification. Three Christian leaders had their “rightist” labels removed, and their files cleared. The reputation of three Buddhist monks who had been forced to commit suicide, namely the monks Faxin 法心, Ruli 如理, and Zhenming 振明, had their reputations completely cleared (*zhaoxue 昭雪*). Sixteen individuals who had been sentenced as counter-revolutionaries had their sentences revoked, and they were allowed to return from the labor camps to their original household registrations, and their relatives who had been sent down to the countryside were allowed back as well. Wages that had been held back were issued, and a major effort was made to restore properties to their original religious organizations. The Catholics got back forty-eight buildings (of their original fourteen churches and seventy-three buildings), the Protestants got back eighty-three of their original 138 churches and 189 buildings, the Buddhists got back 343 of their original 656 monasteries, halls, and temples. Reparations were made totaling nearly 600,000 yuan, and rents were restored to the respective organizations.

Over this period, the Guanghuasi Monastery had first been a center for Cultural Revolutionary work teams, then it had become a “political study center” for suspect cadres, then it was taken over by a middle school, and finally it fell into the hands of the Putian Plastics factory. The monastery was returned to the Buddhists in early 1980. The gov-

ernment committed 230,000 yuan to repairs, but the bulk of the restoration costs were supported by contributions gathered by the Buddhist monk Yuanchan 圓禪 who had been sent to Southeast Asia in 1958, but who returned in 1979 with offers of 1.5 million yuan to rebuild the temple. Similar stories can be told about most of the other major Buddhist monasteries in Putian.

By the end of 1980, the religious associations had been revived, and their bank accounts had been restored. Some remaining religious objects and manuscripts that had been impounded during the Cultural Revolution were restored to their original monasteries. A regular process was set in place for the registration of religious sites as they opened over the period from 1980 to 1990. Programs were set in place for the religious education of monks and nuns, and sixteen Buddhist ordinations were issued in 1982 in Fuzhou at the Yongquansi 涌泉寺 on Gushan 鼓山 mountain. A Buddhist academy was established at the Guanghuasi monastery in 1984. A series of foreign visitors including Spanish Catholic nuns from the Philippines who had worked in Putian until the early 1950s, U.S. relatives of the Methodist minister William Brewster, Japanese adherents of the Obaku Zen sect which traces its roots to the Huangboshan 黃檗山 monastery in nearby Fuqing, all came to visit in the early 1980s. A visit by a fleet of Taiwanese fishing boats from Ilan to the partially restored Tianhou 天后 temple on Meizhou Island in the Meizhou Bay revealed the great desire on the part of Taiwanese worshipers to renew pilgrimage links to the mother temple of the cult. This temple would develop over time into an enormous pilgrimage center, with rival Taiwanese temples competing to build pagodas and temples, and to erect statues and stelae all over the site.

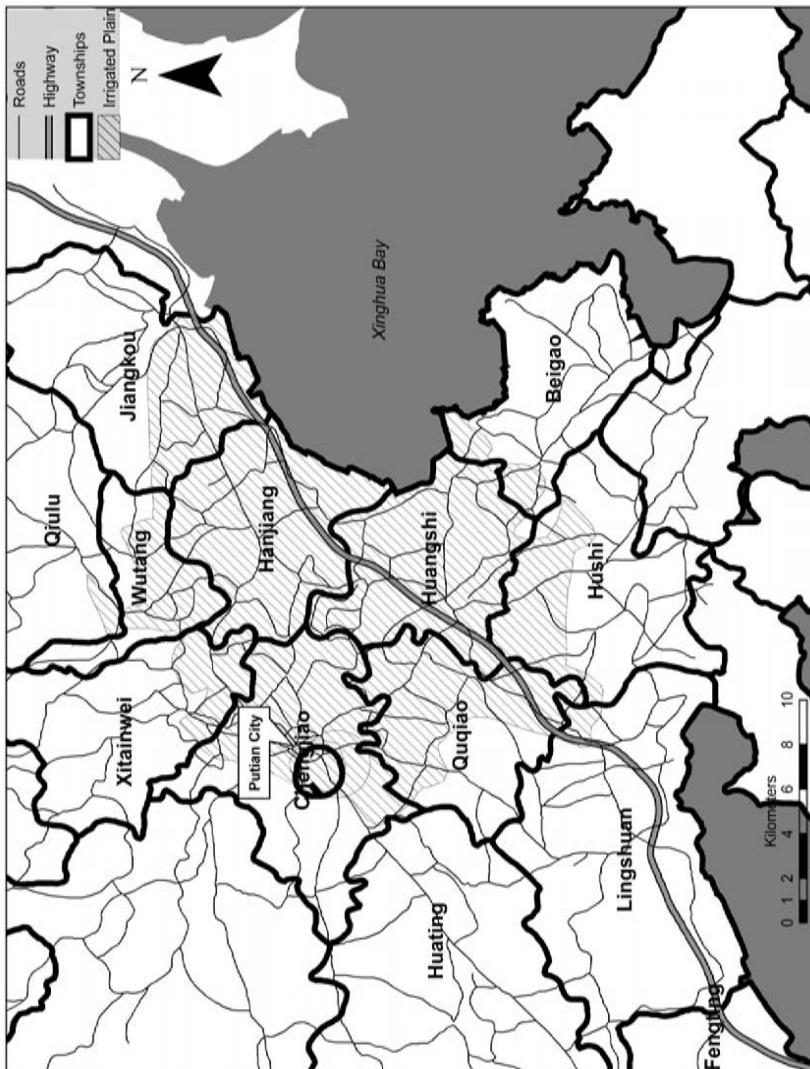
Some visitors were less welcome, including Pentecostal Christian missionaries who sometimes attracted the attention of the Public Security Bureau. Some of the restoration projects were too enthusiastic and ill-considered, and ended up destroying cultural heritage buildings. Some stelae were set up on local initiative, leading to some conflicts with officials in the Religious Affairs Division.

It appears that very low levels of ritual activity continued in some village temples from 1949 to 1965. Mostly however, such rituals went underground, and were performed in secret. The latest date of a temple construction in the period from 1949 to 1980 found in the survey below was 1964, when a temple was built in an isolated village near Hanjiang. But already during the Land Reform movements and the establishment of collective farms in the 1950s, and during the Socialist

Education Campaign of 1963, many temples were impounded by village production brigades and used as warehouses or village administrative headquarters. This pattern continued during the Cultural Revolution, when all open ritual activity ceased, although underground activities continued (spirit medium sessions, Three in One funerals for deceased members and other minor rituals). In the 1980's the vast majority of these temples were restored or rebuilt and often enlarged, as can be seen in the survey volume. A smaller number of new temples have also been built since 1980. By the mid 1980's efforts were in place to begin a process of registration of these temples as authorized "sites for religious activity". Numbered certificates to this effect hang on the walls of many temples, alongside sets of regulations covering financial accounting, hygiene, preservation of cultural relics, and other matters. In a fashion highly reminiscent of the evolution of Taiwanese official relations to local temples and ritual activities from 1950 to 1990, the Chinese state has developed a distant supervisory attitude with an increasing investment in ensuring the continuity and security of these vital social institutions at the village level. Of course, there are still complaints about extravagant waste of funds, the prevalence of spirit mediumism, the potential for charlatans and embezzlement of funds, and the potential for unfair financial burdens on villagers, but in general the attitude has been one of acceptance of a powerful social force with deep roots in local senses of morality, and delight in the playful, competitive performance of local powers that emphasize the role of the gods in everyday life.

Map 28: Contemporary Townships of the Putian Plain shows the current administrative units, the main cities, urban areas, townships and roadways as of the late 1980s.

Another map showing the effects of contemporary planning and development on the Putian plain is *Map 12: Urban Expansion on the Putian Plains* (see *Color Plates*). This map reveals the recent rapid expansion of urban space in the Putian plains. Red regions show the extent of urban space of cities and towns as of 1961. Yellow regions show the expansion of such urban space by 1989. Blue areas show the continued expansion of urban space up to 2002. Overall, urban space doubled over this period to approximately ten percent of the overall area of the Putian plain. The most evident growth areas, beside the urban centers of Putian and Hanjiang, are along the roadways connecting Jiangkou and Hanjiang, and elsewhere across the Putian



plain. A thickening spider web of construction (mostly roadside concrete apartment blocks with ground level storefronts and residential units above) is spreading across the plain, threatening to transform the entire plain into a vast urban megalopolis. In fact, this is close to the future plans of the Regional Planning Office of Putian, which envisions a series of ring roads around Putian, and a vast industrial park extending to the Xiuyu Harbor area. No doubt many more of the villages in this survey will have been razed to make way for these massive development projects in the near future.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONTEMPORARY RITUAL EVENTS IN THE PUTIAN PLAINS: THE RITUAL EVENT

Celebrations on the birthdays of the gods or at the *Yuanxiao* festival of the first full moon of the year are marked with rituals at the village temple conducted by a range of ritual specialists. Processions of the gods are made up of a retinue of villagers and led by the village headsman who rotate into the role of keeper of the incense burners of the gods. In many temples, spirit mediums are possessed by the gods. There are also performances of opera or marionettes on stages in front of the temple, performances of ritual music by traditional musical ensembles, performances by visiting musical troupes such as *shiyin bayue* 十音八樂 ensembles, cart and drum female ensembles, military brass bands and marching bands, and visiting delegations from allied villages. The processions can be as small as a dozen children bearing banners and a gong, along with their mothers, escorted by a temple elder with the incense burner, another with a statue of the god, and a third older man with a loudspeaker mounted on a bicycle playing ritual music. Or a procession of a large village can stretch for over two kilometers, and include motorcycle units in police costumes, dozens of costumed troupes representing the Eight Immortals, the Journey to the West, operatic troupes, martial arts troupes, historical vignettes, ethnic minorities, women in beautiful traditional dresses, floats with children dressed as gods, several musical ensembles (traditional instrumental groups as well as modern marching bands), disco dancers, cross-dressed youths, traditional performance artists like stilt walkers, the man in a boat, the old geezer and his ugly wife, the giant-headed toddlers, and many more. At the center of the procession are the sedan chairs of the gods. These are immediately preceded by banners and placards and lanterns announcing the god, then by groups of ghostly demons with masked faces carrying chains and signs warning of their powers, who dance a mute demon dance in front of each temple they pass. Just in front of the sedan chairs of the gods march the *baban* 八班—the eight guards of the temple whose murals adorn most Putian temple walls. They wear a black robe with red trim and a black rattan hat, and their leader carries a long board like those used in yamen

judicial interrogation sessions. A large procession may feature up to a dozen god's sedan chairs, with costumed bearers, flags and banners, umbrellas of the gods and large fans, and incredibly elaborately carved and gilded sedan chairs—more like movable palaces—that sometimes require a dozen able bodied young sedan chair bearers. Following the gods come the temple headsmen bearing the incense burners of the gods or of the *shê* altar. They wear Qing dynasty long blue robes and Shanghai style fedoras. The temple representatives are followed by a group of elderly women with brooms sweeping the way. Sometimes they wear paper cangues around their necks (or hang them around the necks of children) to pray for forgiveness of sins and recovery of good health. More banners and flags and incense carried by crowds who have joined the procession follow. Finally a long line of small ponies with red embroidered saddles and bells on their harnesses makes up the procession. On their saddles are rectangular paper envelopes addressed to the gods with the prayers of the individual patron who paid for the pony. They are led by horsemen who make a living taking their ponies around the irrigated plain all year to take part in processions. The ponies are quite used to the fireworks that are set off by every household along the way when the gods pass by. Each household prepares a table of offerings, and all the members of the household stand and bow when the gods pass, and then they set off firecrackers and burn spirit money in metal braziers before taking the offerings inside for a feast.

In many villages, the *Yuanxiao* festival is also marked by an evening lantern procession. Some areas place five or six lanterns on top a long stool, and then link the stools with attached lanterns to those of their neighbors. The entire linked line of lanterns can stretch on for over a kilometer. The stools and lanterns are carried on shoulder poles, and the entire line of lanterns makes a spectacular sight as it traces the boundaries of the village land or the outlines of the ritual alliance. The lanterns are generally marked with the name of the lineage, and each household is expected to provide at least one stool fitted out with lanterns and one male son to carry it. As the linked lantern chain reaches the courtyard in front of the temple, it circles or spirals until everyone is in the courtyard. Then truckloads of fireworks, rockets and strings of firecrackers, are set off. When these have all been exploded, the procession moves on, and the next segment takes its place. Needless to say, this can go on all night.

Meanwhile, inside the temple the *Yanshi* 筵師, Masters of Ceremonies, have laid out the altar, with prescribed dishes of offerings of many kinds. Some of these are elaborate works of food art, such as figures of the Eight Immortals made out of vegetables, fruit, fried toufu or wheat gluten. The *Yanshi* also set out yellow envelopes inscribed with the names of the gods invited to the ritual from the heavens and from all the nearby village temples. They also provide guidance to individual worshippers or family representatives bearing offerings to the temple.

Daoist ritual masters and/or Three in One Scripture Masters and/or Buddhist monks set up a portable altar within the temple by hanging some paintings of the higher gods (or simply addressing the rite to a labeled invitation envelope on the altar). For a typical ritual on the birthday of a god, one to three Daoist masters perform rites which last three or four hours, usually beginning after the procession has returned, from 11:00pm to 3:00am. More elaborate rituals involve more ritualists, and can go on throughout the day over a two or three day period.

Spirit possession often takes place as part of a ritual event, usually in the afternoon or evening. Groups of young men first burn talismans, and pass them over their heads and bodies. Then they beat drums, shake castanets, and chant the invocations of the gods with rhythmic steps. One of them will prepare to don the clothing of the gods. Elder altar associates will assist him by tightly tying a cloth around his head, and then placing the god's headdress on him. He will also be dressed in the robes and shoes of the god. When he is fully clothed, he listens to the chanting, beginning to sway back and forth. Suddenly, he slaps the altar table, and picks up the sword of the god. He begins to pace with long strides rapidly around the temple. His handlers guide him out the temple. Once possessed, he may begin a dance, or speak in the voice of the gods. In other regions, the medium often goes bare-chested, or wears a child's apron over his chest to indicate that he is a child of the gods. In some villages, there are regularly scheduled spirit possession sessions, either in the form of spirit writing (usually one of the wielders of the forked branch used to write characters in the sand on top of an altar is possessed), or through direct interaction with a possessed medium. The village temples also provide a regular site for interaction with the gods on a daily basis. Individual worshippers are free to visit at any time, and to pose questions to the gods. If the gods are prepared to respond, the medium will be possessed. In the absence

of a medium, visitors can consult the gods using divination blocks, or by drawing numbered sticks linked to divinatory poetry.

Frequency of ritual events

All the gods are celebrated together during Chinese New Year festivities. These last for over a month, with the larger villages celebrating closer to Yuanxiao (the Lantern Festival) on the full moon of the first lunar month, and smaller villages scheduling their celebrations either beforehand or afterwards, in order to be able to book opera troupes and ritual specialists, and invite guests. The birthdays of individual gods are also celebrated in different temples throughout the year. These festivities can also go one for several days, or over a month, depending on the scope of the celebration. Here again, on the birthday of very popular deities such as Tiangong yuanshuai, the god of theater on lunar 4/8 and in the eighth month, or Tianshang Shengmu (Mazu) on lunar 3/23, or Xuantian shangdi on lunar 3/3, celebrations can be held for several different days around the main feast day of the god. There are also major processions that take place on longer temporal cycles, once every three or five or twelve or sixty years, in which gods are carried to many participating village temples from central temples of the higher order ritual alliances. In the Survey volume, we record 1,642 ritual events in the first lunar month, when every village holds at least one day of celebrations. The later months report lower numbers of birthday celebrations, with 444 in the second month, 422 in the third month, 376 in the fourth month, 301 in the fifth month, 236 in the sixth month, 422 in the seventh month, 412 in the eighth month, 272 in the ninth month, 306 in the tenth month, 96 in the 11th month, and only 30 celebrations recorded in the 12th lunar month. In total, the number of regularly scheduled annual ritual events is close to 4,200, or over 360 per month. This number does not include occasional rites that can be sponsored by individuals or communities at any time. Nor do these figures include private worship that occurs on a daily basis at the over 2,500 temples of the 724 villages of the Putian plains. Given this frequency of ritual activity, we conclude that ritual is an intensification of everyday life, rather than something held apart as separate and sacred. There is a continuum of increasing intensification from daily domestic ritual, to individual offerings of incense and spirit money in the village temples, to participation in the village celebrations on the birthdays of the gods and at Chinese New Year.

CHAPTER FIVE

RITUAL SPECIALISTS

There are many ritual specialists operating in the irrigated Putian plains. This chapter introduces Daoist ritual masters, various kinds of spirit mediums, Three in One Scripture masters, Buddhist monks, Confucian masters of ceremony known in the Putian area as *Yanshi* 筵師 (masters of the banquet), lay Buddhist ritualists of many initiatory movements, and a host of other ritual specialists involved in different aspects of ritual activity.

Daoist ritual specialists

Daoist ritual masters play the predominant role in conducting rituals in village temples during the *Yuanxiao* festival and for the birthdays of the gods, as can be seen on virtually every page of the Survey. In order for so many rituals to be performed in so small an area (464 sq. km), a substantial number of Daoist ritual specialists have to be trained and organized into troupes under the direction of Daoist Masters of High Merit (*Daoshi* 道士, *Gaogong* 高功). Large scale rites require the involvement of up to nine Daoist masters. Average size rites call for three to five ritual specialists, while a single Daoist master can perform a shorter rite on the birthday of a god or at a *Yuanxiao* ritual for a smaller village temple. Thus each region of the Putian plain must support a number of Daoist ritual specialists. Although exact figures would require another focused survey, findings from the Jiuliyang Irrigation system of Jiangkou township can serve as an illustration of the range of Daoist ritual specialist troupes.

In that area, made up of some seventy villages, five troupes of Daoist ritual specialists divide the ritual market between themselves. These are Wu Jiutao 吳九濤 of Shiting, (Qingjingtan 清靜壇), Lu Tianlin of Jiangkou (Xingyingjing 顯應境), Fang Peitian of Jiangkou (Qimiaojing 奇妙境), Huang Falin of Qianmian (Xuanmiaojing 玄妙境), and Huang Wenrui of Guangu (Shenyingjing 神應境). The largest and most established of the groups is led by Daoist Master Wu Jiutao, whose two sons are also accomplished Daoist masters. Several grandsons and

outside disciples complement his ritual troupe. Wu Jiutao lives in Shiting village. His two story home contains an altar to Lord Lao, and a chest filled with manuscripts of Daoist scriptures and liturgies. These include manuscripts passed down by what he claims were five generations of ancestors who worked as Daoist ritual masters. His collection also includes a Qing dynasty manuscript copy of the *Huangtingjing* 黃庭經 (*Scripture of the Yellow Chamber*), a book dating back to the Six Dynasties with depictions of the gods of the body used in Daoist meditation (Schipper 1975; Schipper and Verellen 2004:96–97, 184–5). Master Wu jokes that he uses the book for bed-time reading. Several manuscripts in his collection date to the Qing Daoguang (1821–50) era. A number of manuscripts in his father's hand survive, including one long list of formularies of prayers, memorials, and reports, including some for workers in the sea-salt fields that used to be a feature of the area. Master Wu can perform the entire repertoire of Putian Daoist rites, including some rites specific to the Jiangkou region (see the discussion of *Tanban* spirit medium altar associations below). Master Wu is now in his late 80's, but continues to conduct long and physically demanding rites. Both of his sons are accomplished Daoist ritual masters as well. His prominence in the Jiangkou area led to an invitation in 1985 to conduct rituals at the decennial *Pudu* 普度 rites of universal salvation held at the Jiulidong 九鯉洞 branch temple in Singapore. His services are always in demand, and he maintains a busy schedule. Every ritual requires a prior, extensive period of preparation of posted proclamations, memorials, reports, passports, talismans, and prayers, as well as paper figurines of horses with mounted messengers and substitute bodies. The ground-floor of Master Wu's home is packed with such figures, and is a veritable ritual production center.

Another distinguished Daoist family in the area is lead by a Master Huang in Qianmian village. His manuscript version of the *Daodejing* copies an earlier copyist's date of the Kangxi period. A third well-known troupe is led by another Master Lu, in Jiangkou town. Two other less prominent Daoist families/troupes also regularly perform rites in the Jiangkou area. All five of these families are represented in the *Saigonghui* (*Shigonghui*) 師公會 (Assembly of Daoist Masters) rites held in the main temple of the Jiangkou region, the Dongyueguan, during the *Yuanxiao* rites of the New Year. These Daoist ritual specialists provide ritual services for some sixty or seventy villages in the Jiuliyang irrigation system.

A manuscript photographed in the home of a Daoist priest near Fengting 楓亭 in Xianyou county shows that Daoist ritual specialists kept calendars listing the names of temples with which they had an annual relationship. This particular manuscript lists the names and deities of over sixty temples for whom the Daoist ritual master conducted rites over the course of a single year. Many Daoist households must have similar long-standing arrangements with a network of nearby temples. In addition, of course, they respond to requests for individual and family rituals, from weddings to *shoujing* 收驚 minor rites of gathering the spirits that frighten small children, to *guoguan* 過關 rites of prophylactic passage through astronomically determined adversities, to rites to deliver children from smallpox (*Lujiao* 魯醮), to rites of thanksgiving for good fortune and the repayment of vows to the gods (*Yuanxi* 願戲), to burials and funerals and *gongde* 功德 requiem services for the dead.

For each ritual, in addition to bringing along their own ritual specialists (the chief cantor and the acolytes who lead the dance and light the incense), Daoist Masters must also assemble a group of musicians for ritual performances. These musicians can work for opera troupes, marionettists, ritual music ensembles of various kinds, and Daoist, Buddhist or Three in One ritual masters. The average ensemble includes a drummer (usually a Daoist ritual master), one to two *suona* 喷呐 (double reed shawm) players, and one or two transverse bamboo flute players. Often a cymbalist/gong player is added, and on some occasions stringed instruments join in.

The Buddhist monks in the Putian area conduct a wide range of individual and public rituals as well. These include *Fahui* 法會 (Dharma gatherings and sutra recitations) in the monasteries, as well as funerals, consecrations of temples and ancestral halls, and especially *Pudu* rites of Universal Salvation of the Hungry Ghosts. The latter are rites directed to the ghosts of those outside the sphere of ancestral worship who are said to be released from the Underworld during this month. The rites stand in counterpoint to the New Years Lantern Festival rites of the First lunar full moon when the gods of the village temples are celebrated. The *Lanpen* 蘭盆 *Pudu* rites are usually held on the 15th of the 7th Lunar month (the Zhongyuan Middle Prime date). However, these rites are usually performed in Putian on the Lower Prime (the 15th day (full moon) of the tenth lunar month, due to a local custom related to a legend about the pirate invasions of the late Ming. These

rites can be performed by Buddhist monks, but Daoist ritual specialists have developed their own versions of these rites, as have the Scripture Masters of the Three in One religious movement.

Three in One Scripture Masters

The Three in One religious movement, mentioned in the historical introduction above, has spread to over 1000 temples in the Putian and Xianyou area. This tradition began by considering Confucian morality as the fundamental form of self-cultivation, but added to it Daoist inner alchemy and Buddhist meditation. Lin Zhao'en 林兆恩 (1527–1598), also known as Lin Longjiang 林龍江, the founder of the movement, renounced the route of the official examinations and a career in the court or field bureaucracy. Instead he developed the Nine Stages of the Heart Method, a form of meditation still taught to this day in hundreds of temples in the Xinghua region. Shortly after his death, Lin was deified by his followers as the god Xiawuni 夏午尼. Temples began to be dedicated to him, eighteen within his own lifetime, and twenty-six more by 1663. Several hundred Three in One temples were built over the Qing dynasty, and the number of temples appears to have doubled in Republican times. There are currently over 1000 Three in One temples in Putian and Xianyou counties. Lin's teachings were taken up by several disciples. Amongst these disciples, Lin Zhenming placed particular emphasis on ritual practice, incorporating through close imitation several Buddhist and Daoist rites. Various schisms formed in the movement, with some branches emphasizing study and exposition of the Confucian classics (the Wuben 悟本 school, active in the Hanjiang to Jiangkou area), while others such as the Mingxia 明夏 branch emphasized meditation, visualization and ritual performance. Over time, a large body of scriptures was composed about local gods, in a process similar to the Daoist writing up of local cultic materials into a universal framework (Ding (Dean) and Zheng, 1993). An entire ritual repertoire modeled on that of local Buddhist monks and Daoist ritual masters was developed.

Currently, there are perhaps thirty or forty troupes, made up of five to nine Three in One Scripture Masters each, active in the irrigated Putian plain. Like Daoist ritual masters, they are invited to perform rites at local temples, especially the rites of the *Xiayuan Lanpen pudu* 下元蘭盆普度 (Rites of Universal Salvation of the Lower Prime). It is considered an aspect of their general morality that they tend to

charge less for their ritual services than the Daoist and Buddhist ritual specialists. In many cases in the survey materials below, where villagers reported that Daoist masters were invited to conduct rites on the birthday of a god or during the *Yuanxiao* festivities, it is quite possible that a Three in One Scripture master might have been invited (or might be invited in the future) in place of a Daoist master. Of course, the network of Three in One temples (roughly one for every two villages) provides a large set of venues for ritual activity. Daily offerings of tea and scripture recitation take place in these temples. More elaborate rituals are arranged on the birthday and ascension day of Lin Zhao'en (1/16 and 7/16), and on the days of commemoration of the four principal disciples and other patrons of local Three in One temples. Many other gods are worshipped in some Three in One temples, especially those of the Mingxia branch. For example, the legend goes that Lin Zhenming 林貞明 defeated Tiangong yuanshuai 田公元帥 (the god of theater) in a battle of magical powers (*doufa* 鬥法), and that as a result Tian was forced to serve as the Instructor of Music and Dance for the Three in One ritualists. Generally speaking, participation in a Three in One temple community is voluntary. After initiation into the Heart Method, adherents can practice meditation together, or involve themselves in ritual activities. The Three in One provides an additional, supplemental level of ritual action, rather than replacing or denying any other aspect of village ritual life. Involvement in these ritual actions also brings self-selected villagers into a broader sphere of ritual activity through the many invitations to assist in other Three in One rituals within specific subsections of the Putian irrigated plain. Through the Three in One, these villagers can publicly perform their morality, and find an avenue for the collective and mutually validating pursuit of moral self-cultivation. In a few villages, the Three in One temple has become the main village temple, and the entire community is mobilized for its ritual events, and Lin Longjiang is carried in a sedan chair in a procession around the village boundaries. By virtue of its great success in the Xinghua area, the Three in One has greatly enriched local cultural life by adding another layer of ritual complexity to an already extraordinarily vibrant local scene.

Spirit mediums, part 1

In the late Qing, the irrigation systems began to break down and a pattern of feuding village banner alliances divided the Putian plain into a

checkerboard of local conflicts. Interestingly, at this very point a new form of collective spirit medium training began in the northern part of the irrigated plain, helping to create new networks and connections between local villages

The *Tanban* 壇班 Altar Associations of the northern irrigated plain are a fascinating example of a particular ritual sub-culture that has emerged within a specific, limited area of the Xinghua region. Many temples in the Nanan Weir Jiuliyang irrigated plain, and some temples in the adjacent northern reaches of the northern irrigated plain, have a tradition of collective training of spirit mediums, followed by a graduation ceremony complete with the bestowal of Daoist certificates of immortality. In some seventy to one hundred villages in this region, young boys from the ages of five to fifteen are gathered into a temple for three periods of seven to nine days of intensive training in collective dance, recitation of spells and invocations of the gods, and spirit possession. Only those few children who can dream of the gods are given additional guidance in trance techniques. These *shentong* 神童 (spirit mediums) will then be dressed as the gods of the temple who have possessed them, and they will lead the *futong* 扶童 (assistant lads) in collective dances inside and outside the temple. These dances in the temple courtyards are referred to locally as 行讌 (*xingnuo*) performing the *Nuo* exorcism. This is a reference to the ancient custom of exorcizing the evil spirits at New Years described in classical texts as having been conducted by a *fangxiangshi* 方相氏 (exorcist) in a gold mask with four faces and a black bearskin cape, wielding a lance and leading a troupe of torch-bearing soldiers (Bodde 1975). The term *xingnuo* is used in proclamations issued by the gods to the older spirit mediums in the temple during the training sessions, generally through spirit writing sessions (of these, see below). The three training sessions are referred to as *guanjie* 關戒 (being enclosed in the temple to accept the prohibitions).

At the conclusion of the *guanjie* rites, the doors of the temple are cast open, flames shoot out, and then the newly possessed mediums emerge, following a leader of the dance carrying a flag. The pace of the dance intensifies, and the patterns formed by the medium and the altar assistants follow patterns found in *Huace* 花冊 (flower pattern books) kept by Masters of the Altar Association. These masters also keep documents listing the spells of invocation and the melodies of the chants, along with collections of couplets for decorating the inner

and outer altars, and sets of documents issued by the gods during the *guanjie* training sessions. After completing several rounds of training, initiates undergo a *yuxiu* 預修 (preparatory cultivation [for immortality]) rite and receive additional certificates, making them into *gongcao* 功曹 (divine officials). These documents are kept in small wooden boxes stored in the temples alongside an altar dedicated to the spirit mediums of the temple throughout the ages (*Lidai gutan* 歷代古壇). The earliest dated stelae of this kind we have located are from the late Qing and early Republican period, but we have also found Daoist liturgies for the granting of certificates to the Altar Associates dating to the Daoguang period (1821–1850).¹

Each *guanjie* rite is marked by elaborate ceremonies and processions that draw in a large number of delegations from surrounding villages who bring gifts and offer support, and who are feasted in return. During one *guanjie* ritual we attended in Liangcuo 梁厝 village in 1993, a small shed was built to contain strips of yellow paper bearing congratulatory messages from some forty-five villages in the vicinity. Thus the *guanjie* rites formed the event-nodes of yet another ritual network in the area (see Dean and Zheng 1993 for a description of this ritual).

The *guanjie* spirit medium training rites were revived in the late 1980's and early 1990's, just at the point when Overseas Chinese from Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia were first allowed to return to China. As will be explained below, many of these émigrés from the Jiangkou region had strong connections with networks of local temples across Southeast Asia built up by spirit medium societies. These return visitors put great emphasis on rebuilding temples and sponsoring *guanjie* spirit medium training sessions. As an entire generation had been skipped as a result of the Chinese revolution and especially the Cultural Revolution, there were many families eager to include their male children in the training sessions. However, due to the hyper-development of the area, many young men would leave their villages when they reached the age of eighteen or twenty. They moved first to construction sites and factories in Putian, Fuzhou and Xiamen, and then later all around China in the footsteps of the far-flung Putian business networks. Later they moved to Macao and to Southeast

¹ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 325, p. 361, No. 329, p. 364.

Asia, often basing themselves initially in the temples of the spirit medium societies. In more recent years, they have spread to Europe (especially Milan) and Argentina. Thus it became necessary to hold repeated spirit-medium trainings every five years or so to replenish the numbers of *tanban* altar associates. One result of this acceleration of a cycle of training that appears to have been once in a generation in late Qing times has been the spreading of a profound degree of familiarity with the local gods, their legends, and their miracles amongst the population of the northern irrigated plain.

Once trained as a *shentong* (spirit medium) or a *futong* (assistant to the medium), the member of the *Tanban* takes part in annual rites at *Yuanxiao* which include exorcistic dances outside the temple (*xing-nuo* 行儻) and sealing the roadways leading into the villages against demonic influences (*fenglu* 封路). The spirit mediums are often capable of transmitting communications from the god through spirit writing (usually two men, one of whom at least must be possessed, grasp the two ends of a forked branch and use the other end to write rapid, swirling characters on an altar (sometimes in sand). These movements are interpreted by a third officiant. Such séances can be regular, or specially requested for emergencies. Topics covered include remedies for disease, advice on life changing decisions, or even investment advice (Jordan and Overmyer 1986). In addition, the members of the *Tanban* have achieved a kind of preliminary immortality, and thus seem to be free of the danger of death pollution. They are called upon in large funerals and requiem services to assist in tearing down and burning the paper underworlds and other ritual paraphernalia of these rites.

The history of the rise of the *Tanban* ritual tradition is obscure, as collective spirit medium training may have been part of the local culture for many centuries. The particular form this tradition has taken in the northern reaches of the Putian plain can be seen as a response to the breakdown of social controls at the end of the Qing over the irrigation systems and other aspects of everyday life. As mentioned in the historical introduction above, at that time the villages of the Putian plain divided up into a checkerboard of feuding alliances. Most of these banner alliances were based on the ritual alliances, but there are a significant number of instances in which ritual alliances split into competing and feuding banner alliances. It is likely that the rise of the *Tanban* ritual tradition was a response to the breakdown of higher order alliances. The new networks of mutually supporting villages that developed around these multiple sites of spirit medium training may

have provided a counter-measure to the increasingly centripetal forces tearing the village alliances apart.

One particular group of spirit mediums have left a more complete record. These are the founders of the Jiulidong 九鯉洞 (Nine Carp Cavern temple) of Shiting 石庭, which has since spread to Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia. The founders of this spirit medium led network of temples received a vision of four hitherto unknown gods: the Immortals Lu Shiyuan 士元盧仙長, Wang Chengguang 成光王仙師, Chen Shande 善德陳仙師, and XieYuanhui 元暉謝仙師. Other groups of spirit mediums in the area worship different deities under the name of the Jinlun 金輪 (Golden Wheel) and Qiongyaopai 瓊瑤派 (Fine Jade). A group calling themselves devotees of the Lushan altar are dedicated to Zhaoling sandian zhenjun 昭靈三殿真君, Jiutian Tiangong yuanshuai 九天田公元帥, Qitian dasheng 齊天大聖, Fatian Zhang shengjun 法天張聖君, and Tongtian Zhang shenghou 通天章聖侯, while the Jinlun spirit medium altar is dedicated to Xuantian shangdi 玄天上帝, Wen 溫公元帥, Kang 康公元帥, (Wuxian) Ma 五顯馬元帥, and (Xuantan) Zhao yuanshuai 玄壇趙元帥. For further information on these groups, see the Chapter Nine on transnational temple networks below.

Spirit mediums, part 2

Spirit mediums play an important role in the ritual events of the entire Putian plain, but there are important regional variations. In the northern irrigated plain, but south of the area which practices *tanban* collective spirit medium training, there is a ritual tradition known as *caihua* 採花 (lit. plucking flowers), which actually refers to a test of endurance in which mediums stand bare-chested in the flames of a large Roman candle. The mediums of these village temples are primarily self-selected (or as many claim, they are chosen by the gods, sometimes against their wills) and trained by older mediums and temple keepers. Groups of young men chant the invocations of the gods until one of their number becomes possessed. This fellow is then dressed in the god's clothing. After talismans have been burned over him, he slaps his hand on his altar (usually the portable yamen of the inspecting god), and leaps to his feet. He will then proceed to dance with an exaggerated gait inside or outside the temple. Other mediums may join in this dance. On set occasions, mediums from several

surrounding village temples are invited to *caihua* ceremonies. The local mediums greet the visiting mediums with a series of exaggerated bows and a swooping dance. The visiting mediums first visit the temple and honor the local gods, and then go onto a raised platform outside the temple. There they bear their chests, and stand in the shooting flames of a large Roman candle. After enduring as many of these showers of sparks as possible, they descend from the platform, and return to their home village with their entourage. Such events can go on all night, and involve thirty or forty villages in yet another ritual network. In some areas, the mediums also strike themselves with maces made of sharp nails or pierce their cheeks or hands with skewers. These mediums are carried on sedan chairs through the streets of the village, at times temporarily blocking major roads for a short time. In other areas, the mediums are carried in procession through the village streets to each temple, where they perform obeisances and wield their weapons. In the evening, these mediums are led over or around bonfires and heaps of glowing coals, followed by teams of young men running with miniature sedan chairs made of palm leaves with the god's names inscribed on the chairs.

The spirit mediums of the southern irrigated plain do not appear to play so prominent a role as those of the northern irrigated plain, including especially the *tanban* of the Jiuliyang plain around Jiangkou. However, their presence is essential to ritual events in the southern plain as well. Mediums escort the processions of the gods, or are carried in sedan chairs within the procession. Mediums go into trance, write talismans, walk over burning coals, and engage in spirit writing and healing rites. Nonetheless, it is reasonable to speculate that the relative predominance of literati households and prominent lineages in the southern irrigated plain led to a situation in which the spirit mediums were less spectacularized and central to communal ritual than in the northern plain.

Spirit mediums, part 3

Other spirit mediums active in the Putian plains specialize in contacting the dead, and thus fall somewhat outside the parameters of this study. Many of these are women who have their own small, private household altars or small temples, and so may have escaped notice in the survey below.

Other ritual specialists

Ritual specialists proliferate in the Putian plains, as elsewhere throughout Chinese society. Marionettists are also ritual specialists. The leader of an opera troupe, or a senior member of the troupe, performs rituals for the consecration of the stage prior to performances. Some plays, such as the *Mulian* 目連 plays, incorporate ritual sequences directly into the drama. *Yanshi* (Masters of the Banquet) prepare the altars and organize the offerings provided during the rituals. Their role resembles that of the *Lisheng* 禮生 (Masters of Confucian rites) who play a central role in the ritual events of the Minnan and Minxi regions (Liu 2006). Members of the processions of the gods include ritual performers wearing masks who perform “demonic dances” while rattling their chains and brandishing their official edicts from the underworld.

One could argue that each family altar represents the ritual center of attraction for the family, which can be seen as a ritual unit. A graduate student once attended a rite of worship of ancestors within a *gucuo* 古厝 (old ancestral house—not a full-fledged ancestral hall). She noticed that there were no men present, only older and middle aged women laying out offerings on tables in the main hall of the home and lighting sticks of incense. When she asked why there were no men present, people replied that of course they were there. The implication seemed to be that the women were representing their male affinal lines, so that the patriline was clearly present in the hall (Anderson, 2002).

If one views each household in a village as a ritual actor/element in a collective rite of the village temple which mobilizes the entire community, then the ritual basis of familial life in Chinese society can be seen as multifaceted and multilayered. As we will see below, participation in certain communal rites is mediated through ritual membership in lineage as well as settlement. Ritual specialists assist in these various mediations. Of course, the *paterfamilias* (or often his surrogate, the devout matron of the family) is also a kind of ritual specialist. Everything from property rights to inheritance to variegated social roles are mediated through ritual roles.

Some villages (a distinct minority) in the Putian plains have maintained elaborate lineage hall ancestral rites, in which *Lisheng* (masters of ceremony) from within the lineage play a central role in calling out the sequence of ritual actions (bowing, offerings, invocations, invitations, further bowing and more offerings). They also organize sacrifices

at the graves of lineage ancestors (see Dean 1993, for a description of the rituals performed at the grave of the parents of a local god).

Buddhist monks

Buddhist ritual specialists play an important role in some local village ritual events as well. Since the Cultural Revolution, when the major Buddhist monasteries were closed and most monks and nuns were forced into secular life, Buddhism has revived in Putian. The Guang-huasi was in ruins during the Cultural Revolution, but it has been rebuilt, and now contains an active Buddhist academy which trains and ordains Buddhist monks. This center is second only to Nanputuo 南普陀 Temple in Xiamen and Gushansi 鼓山寺 in Fuzhou in the training and ordaining of Buddhist monks in Fujian. A nunnery in Putian is dedicated to the training of Buddhist nuns. Many of the ordained monks and nuns from these academies are assigned to local small scale monasteries and nunneries in the Putian area.

In (official) theory, Buddhist rites should only be performed within monastic walls, and several larger monasteries have facilities for in-house requiem services. These monasteries also conduct periodic *Fahui* 法會 (Dharma Assemblies) which are well attended and which are sponsored through voluntary contributions. Some monasteries offer outreach programs for lay initiates as well. However, a number of the mid-level monasteries maintain troupes of ritual specialist monks who can be invited to perform rites in the villages. Sometimes a troupe is assembled from several smaller monasteries. These troupes perform funerals, requiems, *Lanpen pudu* 蘭盆普度 (rites of universal salvation for the hungry ghosts), consecrations of temples and ancestral halls, blessings, exorcisms, and a wide range of minor rites for families or individuals.

Lay Buddhist groups and so-called “secret religions”

Several lay Buddhist groups and so called “secret religions” can also be found in the Putian plains. These include the Longhuajiao 龍華教, the Jintangjiao 金堂教 (also written as the Jintongjiao 金童教 or the Jing-tangjiao 經堂教, but more commonly referred to as the Guanmenjiao 關門教), and the Xiantianjiao 先天教. Like the Three in One religious movement discussed above, these groups represent additional levels of

voluntary engagement in ritual and self-cultivation available to villagers. They do not exclude participation in everyday village ritual, but rise out of that background. Moreover, like the Three in One, they are not in fact “secret religions” at all, but rather openly welcome new initiates to their temples, where stelae openly outline their histories and ritual practices.² The front hall of their temples are dedicated to common Buddhist deities such as Guanyin 觀音, the Bodhisattva of Mercy. The inner chambers are restricted to initiates, and are dedicated to a range of gods, including the founders of their religious movements and chief disciples of their respective founders. They welcome new initiates, and provide a carefully guided series of meditational levels for their initiates. They also maintain an internal hierarchy, with various ranks and liturgical functions. Thus they also have their own ritual specialists who conduct the rituals they have developed. The fact that their worship and guided forms of self-cultivation are restricted to initiates has led to the label of “secret religions”, and to their frequently being made the object of state suspicion and often persecution during the late Qing and in the post 1949 period (see Overmyer 1976, 1999; Ma and Han 1992; Seiwert 2003).

The Longhuajiao 龍華教 Buddhist religious movement is a lay Buddhist group that evolved out of the larger movement referred to as the Wuweijiao 無為教, begun by Luo Qing 羅清 (1442–1527). Luo Qing was the author of collection of scriptures and *baojuan* 寶卷 (precious scrolls) that outlined his theory of *zhenkong* 真空 (true emptiness) known as the *Wubuliuce* 五部六冊 (*Five scriptures in six volumes*). The main deities introduced in his writings are Zhenkong Laozu 真空老祖 and Wusheng Laomu 無生老母. A mantra that sums up the teachings of Patriarch Luo goes “*zhenkong guxiang, wusheng fumu* 真空故鄉, 無生父母 (True emptiness is my home (where I find) the unborn venerable father and mother)”. Luo Qing’s teachings attracted many officials at the court, especially palace eunuchs. His teachings also spread along the Grand Canal amongst groups of boatmen. The rapid spread of the movement led to jealous attacks from mainstream Buddhist groups and eventually to court suspicion and prohibitions, leading to his imprisonment and ultimately to the burning of the *Wubuliuce* in 1616. Meanwhile, Luo Qing’s family members established the Wuweijiao 無為教. These teachings were carried on by the second and third

² Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995, No. 304, p. 342.

patriarchs of the Wuweijiao, Yin Jinan 殷繼南 (Puneng 普能) and Yao Wenyu 姚文余 (Pushan 普善) in Shandong. Yao declared himself to be the Patriarch Wuji shengzu 無濟聖祖 and changed the name of his teachings to the Longhuajiao 龍華教. The principal scripture of the movement is the *Sanzu xingjiao yinyou baojuan* 三祖行腳因由寶卷. The rules and liturgies of the movement are found in the *Dacheng Zhengjiao keyi* 大乘政教科儀.

The term Longhua 龍華 refers to the First assembly of the Lamp-lighter Buddha, which was followed by the Second assembly of Sakyamuni Buddha and which should be completed by the Third Assembly of Maitreya, the future Buddha. Like the Three in One movement, the Longhuajiao practices initiation into a graduated series of levels of meditation leading to enlightenment. They have developed their own rituals, scriptures, liturgies, hierarchical ranks in an organization, and stages of meditation.³ Initiation involves accepting the Three Refuges (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha), and the Five Prohibitions (against killing, stealing, licentiousness, wild speech, and eating sharp foods and drinking alcohol). Adherents also accept the Six Sacred Maxims proclaimed by the Qing emperors.

Self cultivation within the Longhuajiao is divided into the nine stages.⁴ The three main rituals practiced are called: 1) *shegong* 設供, setting out the offerings (the first assembly of the Dragon Flower); 2) *kaijing* 開經, opening up the scriptures (the middle assembly of the dragon flower); and 3) *ranla* 燃蠟, lighting the candles (the final assembly of the Dragon Flower). These rites involve the following set of rituals: laying out of pure rice offerings, presentation of candles, offerings of food, feasting the Buddhas, feast of offerings, feast of fruits, conclusion of the offerings, further offerings of tea and incense. Throughout these rites there are fixed *gathas* sung and specific *sutras* recited including the *Xinjing* 心經 (Heart Sutra) and the *Tianjing*

³ The internal ranks within the movement are divided into nine levels as follows: 1. *chu xiaocheng* 初小乘, 2. *dacheng* 大乘, 3. *sansancheng* 三三乘, 4. *xiaojinyin* 小進引, 5. *dajinyin* 大進引 6. *siju* 四局, 7. *qingxu* 清虛, 8. *taikong* 太空, 9. *kongkong* 空空.

⁴ The nine stages are outlined in Chen Puyang's 陳浦揚 *Zhengdao jieti* 正道階梯 (Stages of the True Way). They are 1) *dulun* 敦伦 good conduct, 2) *chijie* 持戒 uphold prohibitions, 3) *xiyi* 習儀 practice the liturgy; 4) *xinjiao* 信教 have faith in the teachings; 5) *kanjing* 看經 read the scriptures; 56) *duzhong* 度眾 save the masses; 7) *jigong xingshan* 積功行善 actively carry out good works 8) *butui chuxin* 不退初心 do not renounce one's original heart/mind 9) *mingdao qin qiongyuan* 明道秦窮源 become illumined by the Dao and trace it back to its origins.

天經 (*Heaven Sutra*), the latter a creation of the Longhuajiao. Presentation of incense is called the ten reports and the deities are all worshipped with three bows and five kowtows.

The deities worshipped in these rites include the various Buddhas and Guanyin, but also Taishang Laozu 太上老祖 and Wusheng laomu 無生老母 and the Lidai Dade Zushi 歷代大德祖師 (Ancestral Masters of great virtue through the ages), Wuji jiaozhu Xiantian Puneng Zushi 無極教主先天普能祖師 (Limitless Master of the Teachings, Ancestral Master Puneng of the Former Heavens). Note that the Second Patriarch is singled out. Other deities invoked include Yuhuang dada 玉皇大帝, Sanguan dadi 三官大帝, Xuantian shangdi 玄天上帝, several Perfected Beings, Bodhisattvas, immortals, astral gods, Heavenly Kings, and other gods. Comprehensive lists of the Patriarchs and their disciples are also invoked and worshipped. Finally, various protector deities (marshals) and the City God and the tutelary spirits of the region are invoked, along with the gods of each household.⁵

There are various and conflicting accounts of the transmission of the Longhuajiao into Putian (see Wang, 1996).⁶ The first temple in Putian was the Yiyuantang 一源堂 in Duotou 嘚頭, which was established by Luo Pudong 羅普棟 in the Yongzheng period (1723–1735). Luo Pudong was a basket weaver who is said to have spread the Longhua movement to over a hundred temples in the peninsula extending beyond Hushi from Puxi to Meizhou. The Yiyuantang collapsed during the Daoguang period (1821–50), but it was rebuilt in 1988 by the Chuandeng Puxin 傳燈普信, who raised funds from initiates living in the four surrounding townships. The Jindetang 金德堂 was built in Duotou 嘚頭 in 1818 by Lin Shubiao 林樹標 and his brother Lin

⁵ The Fourth Patriarch Puxiao 蒲霄 first introduced these teachings into Fujian (Mindong 閩東) in 1639. After the Longhuajiao was prohibited in the Xunzhi period (1644–1662), the Fifth Patriarch Pubu 瀑布 fled from Zhejiang to Jianning in northern Fujian. In 1691 the Ninth Patriarch Putong 普通 escaped arrest in Jianning and fled to the Fuzhou/Changle area, at the invitation of one Pusheng 普升, temple leader of the Changle Wuweijiao Wenmingtang 長樂無為教文明堂. After Putong's death in 1696, the Tenth Patriarch Chen Puyue 陳璞月 built the Yishitang 一食堂, the main temple of the Longhuajiao movement in Fujian. The movement was transmitted to Taiwan from this temple in 1736.

⁶ In 1796 the Fourteenth Patriarch Puyou 蒲有 established the Hanyangtang 涵陽堂 temple in Baiheling 白鶴齡 in Xianyou. According to notes in a 1937 lithographic edition of the *Keyi baojun* 科儀寶卷 printed by the Chuandeng Pugan 傳燈普感 of the Yixintang 義心堂 in Putian city, another line of transmission descended through the abovementioned Pusheng 普升 (who must have converted from Wuweijiao to Longhuajiao) to one Luo Pudong 羅普棟.

Shufu 林樹福. The temples was expanded by Li Chongyu 李崇余 and seven others in 1857. Zeng Yongchun 曾咏春 bequeathed temples land and the Chuandeng Li Puda 傳燈離普大 inscribed a stele commemorating these acts. In 1985, the temple was rebuilt by an Overseas Chinese initiate named Li Puhui 李普惠.

According to Zhang Qin's 張琴 (1945) *Putian xianzhi* 莆田縣志, there were altogether 320 Longhuajiao temples active in Putian and Xianyou counties in Republican times. The 1991 *Putianxian zongjiaozhi caogao* 莆田縣宗教志草稿 claims that there were close to 100 temples of the Longhuajiao in the Xinghua area active in the 1980's. In addition to the temples described above, they list the following as the most important of these temples: The Hanjiang Yangfang 涵江揚芳 (Zilintang 紫林堂), the Xiandetang 賢德堂 in Hanjiang, the Xinxiangtang 信香堂 and Yixintang 義信堂 in Putian, and the Rendetang 仁德堂 in Tianwei 田尾 village. As noted above, many of the Longhuajiao temples were established in the peninsula extending beyond the irrigated Putian plain towards the sea beyond Hushi. This area was affected by the coastal evacuation of the early Qing. Lineage networks and irrigation networks were weakened in these regions. Tighter and more focused networks based on membership through initiation into one of many such religious movements (Three in One, Longhua, Guanmen, Xiantian and other groups) flourished in these circumstances.

The Jintangjiao 金堂教 or Guanmenjiao 關門教 was no exception to this rule, as it also flourished in the *jiewai* (beyond the borders) regions of Putian. According to local adherents, their tradition can be traced back to one Wang Zuotang 王左塘 (1564–1629), religious name Guangming 法名光明, style name Taixu 號太虛, who was a disciple of Longhuajiao Master Sun zushi 孫祖師. Master Sun sent Wang to spread the teachings in the Suzhou and Jinhua regions of Zhejiang, where Wang changed the name of the teachings to the Jingtangjiao 金堂教. He was arrested in 1613 and released from jail in 1619, when he set out again for the south to spread the teachings once again.⁷ According to writings of the Jintangjiao such as the *Sanjiao genyuan*

⁷ Wang Zuotang is sometimes confused in the writings of the Jintangjiao with Wang Daosen 王道森 (1542–1619), the founder of the Wenxiangjiao 聞香教, also called the Dachengjiao 大乘教. The latter was wildly successful in spreading his teachings, winning support from relatives in the imperial household and eventually securing imperial favors. He was subsequently denounced by officials at court and thrown into prison, where he died in 1619.

xingjiao shijiji 三教根源行腳事跡集, one of Wang Zuotang's disciples named Dong Yingliang 董應亮, *hao* Puguang 普光 spread the teachings to Putian, converting one Cai Wenju 蔡文舉⁸ (see however the discussion of these accounts in Seiwert, 2003, 248 fn. 117, 432, and Wang, 1996).

The first Jintangjiao temple in Putian was established in 1622 by Cai Wenju 蔡文舉 and Chen Zhizhai 陳直齋. Cai Wenju, 蔡文舉, Zi Huayu 字華宇, known locally as Cai Ahgong 蔡阿公, was from Xiaohu 孝戶 near Zhenqian village in Hanjiang 涵江鎮前村. Cai was a merchant transmitting goods to Wenzhou, and had joined the Long-huajiao of Yao Wenyu 姚文余. He converted to the Jintangjiao after encountering Wang Zuotang 王左塘 in Jinhua. He built the first Jintangjiao temple in Shanyu 上俞 village in Hanjiang. His first ten disciples were chosen from within his own lineage. His tomb is in Wutang Xilin village on Xizhai mountain 梧塘西林西宅山. Each year on lunar 9/6 the tombs are swept and rites are held in turn by the following three temples: Caizhai Daonanci 蔡宅道南祠, the Shudetang 樹德堂, and the Caidai Shudetang 蔡埭樹德堂.⁹ The leaders of the movement in Putian passed down through ten generations, all in the Cai lineage.¹⁰ In Putian, the Jintangjiao was often mistaken for an anti-Manchu, Ming restoration secret society, and the image of Cai Wenju was suspected by some officials of representing the Chongzhen Emperor (崇禎皇帝, or Chi Huangdi 赤皇帝 (reigned 1627–44).

⁸ In these accounts, Dong and several others of Wang's disciples manage to bribe their way into the prison where Wang had just died (in fact, Wang was released). In 1635, when the Bailianjiao 白蓮教 (a catch all label for many lay Buddhist religious movements) was prohibited, Dong was imprisoned in Beijing, and Cai and eighteen others disciples managed to visit him in jail as well.

⁹ A portrait of Cai Wenhu in Ming costume belonging to the Daonanci is hung up on these occasions.' Spirit tablets dedicated to Cai (under the name Huayugong 華宇公) are also worshipped in the front halls of the Jintangjiao temples in Putian (alongside more familiar deities such as Guanyin 觀音 and the Sanguan dadi 三官大帝. Inside the restricted chamber of these temples a painting of Wusheng laomu 無生老母 is worshipped.

¹⁰ In 1683, the grandson of Cai Wenju, Cai Quanji 蔡權即 transmitted the Jintangjiao to Taiwan, building the Zhendetang 鎮德堂 in Tainan (according to the Jintangjiao writings, the transmission occurred in 1725). The Ninth Patriarch Cai Guizhang 蔡圭璋 moved to Taiwan in the Guangxu period (1875–1908) and established several temples including the Zengshengtang 增盛堂. Eventually over thirty halls were established across the island. For further information, see Wang, 1996.

The movement has nine ranks.¹¹ The initiates are all vegetarian, but are allowed to marry. Rituals are held on regular occasions such as the birthday of the founder (Cai), the Sancheng jiupin fahui 三乘九品法會, and other annual *bangong* 辦公 rituals. Deaths of fellow initiates are celebrated with the recitation of scriptures sending them home to their “true home”. The largest scale rites are called *manzhuo* 滿桌, and involve collective performances by troupes of ritualists from several halls. It is claimed that every three year a tithe is transmitted to the Suzhou founding temple of the movement.

The Jintangjiao produced some twenty scriptures, hagiographies, and liturgies. The numbers of halls in the Xinghua area is said to have been well over 100 in Republican times, with 130 currently active. Some of the better known temples are the Four Cai and Three Chen temples 四蔡三陳. The four Cai temples are: 1) Shudetang 樹德堂, said to have been the first such temple in Putian, is located in Shangyu 上俞 village near Hanjiang. The temple has shrunk from its original nine halls to a single hall. 2) The Daonanci is in Caizhai Xiacuo 蔡宅下厝道南祠. This was the home of the Eighth to the Tenth Patriarch, and the current temple master is also a member of the Cai lineage. 3) The Shudetang in Caizhai Dingcuo 蔡宅頂厝樹德堂 is also led by a Cai lineage member. Some temples are close to extinction, such as the 4) Shudetang 樹德堂 in Hanjiang Daili Caidai 涵江埭里蔡埭 and the Shudeci Changlin Daba village 暢林大壩樹德祠. By contrast, the three Chen temples (founded by descendants of Chen Zhizhai 陳直齋) include the 1) Dabenci in Huangshi Huadi Donghua village 黃石華堤東華 大本祠 which was restored in the late 1980s by Overseas Chinese donations. 2) Libenci 立本祠 in Tangtou village 塘頭 near Hanjiang and 3) the Jianyuanci 見源祠 in Xijiang 西江 village near Hanjiang. Other well known temples include the Yichengtang in Nanmen 南門意誠堂 and the Dejutang 德聚堂 in Xihong 西洪 village near Huangshi. The village of Longhua 龍華 near Huangshi has over ten Jintangjiao halls. The village was said to have been entirely vegetarian, down to the feed given to the pigs and the snacks served at temple fairs.

¹¹ These ranks are called 1) shangen 上恩; 2) shugong 叔公; 3) guanqian 管前; 4) benguan 本管; 5) shouling 首領; 6) chuantou 船頭; 7) huishou 會首; 8) hufa 护法; 9) zhongsheng 羣生. Initiates are known as the zhongsheng, and the leader of each hall is called the shugong 叔公, or more commonly shifu 師父 (master).

The Xiantianjiao 先天教 is related to the teachings of Huang Dehui 黃德輝 of Poyang county in RAOZHOU prefecture of Jiangxi province 江西省饒州府鄱陽縣 (Seiwert, 2003:431–432, 502–504). The movement was renamed the Qinglianjiao 青蓮教. Around 1850, the Fuzhou branch changed its name to Xiantianjiao 先天教 to avoid arrest.¹² In the Guangxu period (1875–1908), the current leader of the Fuzhou temple, Zhang Daoxing 張道興, sent Ouyang De 歐陽德, who came from Putian city, to the Xinghua area to spread the Xiantianjiao teachings. Over time, some forty-two Xiantianjiao temples were established in Xianyou and Putian counties, and many thousands were initiated. In Republican times, two temples were still active in the Hanjiang area, but the majority of the remaining Xiantianjiao are found in the Xiuyu 秀嶼鎮 township area beyond Hushi and the further down the peninsula away from the southern irrigated plain. The best known temple is the Dongshantang on Xiangyuan on Xiangshan mountain 象山仙姑巖東山堂. There are eight ranks in the Xiantianjiao.¹³ In addition to a strong emphasis on Confucian morality, inner alchemy is also practiced. Most initiates live at home, and marriage is discouraged, with couples living separately. Currently, the following scriptures are recited in rites of this tradition: *Xingming guizhi* 性命圭旨, *Wuxin qiongyuan* 悟新琼源, and the *Xinjing* 心經.

Perhaps due to their continued persecution, the survey did not turn up any information about groups such as the Yiguandao or the Falungong in the villages of the irrigated Putian plain. Generally speaking, the latter movement seems to be primarily an urban phenomenon (see Palmer 2007).

Christian communities

Although not the main focus of this survey, significant groups of Christian families are mentioned in several of the village entries. However,

¹² In 1861 the leader of the Fuzhou Xiantianjiao, one Li Daosheng 頂道生, sent Li Changjin 李昌晉 and Huang Changcheng 黃昌成 to Taiwan to spread the teachings, which led to the establishment of six temple in Tainan, three in Taizhong, ten in Taipei, and one in the Penghu Islands. See Wang, 1996.

¹³ These ranks are called 1) shiwei 師位, 2) tudi 土地; 3) dinghang 頂航 4) baoen 保恩; 5) yinen 引恩; 6) zhengen 鄭恩; 7) tianen 天恩; 8) zhongsheng 署生 (first level of initiation). Initiates follow strict prohibitions and maintain a vegetarian diet. Four levels of self-cultivation are distinguished: 1) qiuchan 求懺; 2) diandao 典道; 3) shuihuo jiqi 水火即齊; 4) huohou 火候.

the survey did not attempt to gather systematic information on Catholic and Protestant churches in the villages. In this section, the names and locations of some well-known churches are provided.

The Italian Catholic missionary Giulio Aleni 艾儒略 was based in Fuzhou between 1625 and 1635, with the support of Prime Minister Ye Xianggao 葉向高, a native of Fuqing. In 1632 a Catholic Church was built in Putian city, and 107 people were baptized. A collection of poems exchanged with Aleni entitled the *Minzhong zhugong zengshi* 閩中諸公贈詩 (*Poems sent by literati throughout Fujian*) includes sixty-seven literati, of whom six were from Putian. The beginnings of Chinese Christian statuary is traced to the Putian sculpture Zeng Jing 曾鯨, cognomen Bochen 波臣 (1568–1650). After the Qing Manchu conquest, a Hunanese Chinese convert surnamed Chen 陳 established a village of his descendants in Dongmei, Pinghai 平海東美, which remained Catholic for many generations. A Catholic church named the Hunantang 湖南堂 was built there in 1871. Other Catholic churches were built in Pinghai and Nanri Island beyond the reaches of the irrigated alluvial plain in 1830, 1839, and 1846. In 1849 a Catholic church called the Hanjiangtang 涵江堂 was built in the Putian plain in Tangbei 塘北 village, and two other churches were built nearby in Daili 墓里 village (Xijiangbiantang 西江邊堂) and Caidai 蔡埭 villages. The Hanjiangtang remained the principal Catholic church in the Putian area. A Catholic church was built in Putian city in 1851. The first Catholic church in the southern irrigated plain was built in Dongyang village 東洋堂 outside Huangshi in 1899, and another was built the same year in Beigao 北高堂. According to the *Putian zongjiaozhi caogao* (1991: 670, 677), there were fourteen Catholic churches and seventy-three properties belonging to the church after 1949. After the Cultural Revolution, fifty-two were left, and forty-eight of these properties had been restored or returned to the Church in the early 1980's. Some twenty churches have been reopened.

The *Putian zongjiaozhi caogao* (1991: 670, 678–682) also states that the Protestant churches had 138 churches and 189 additional properties in Xianyou and Putian counties after 1949, and that after the Cultural Revolution 97 properties remained, of which 83 had been returned by 1990. These figures do not include more recently built churches of denominations such as the True Jesus church. Of those churches listed, perhaps fifteen are found within the irrigated Putian plain. These include the Kengbeitang 坑北堂 in Hushi Liucuo Kengbei 劉厝坑北 village, founded in 1892, the Meifengtang 梅鳳堂 in Putian,

founded in 1897, the Beigaotang 北高堂 founded in 1901, the Qiaodoutang 僑兜堂 founded in Qiaodou village near Huangshi in 1906, the Hushitang 窒石堂 founded in 1908, the Shitingtang 石庭堂 in Shixi 石西 near Jiangkou founded in 1922, the Hanjiangtang 涵江堂 founded in 1923, the Jiangkoutang 江口堂 founded in 1923, the Tangtoutang 塘頭堂 founded in Tangtou Xiangli 坑北巷利 village near Hanjiang in 1926, another Hushitang 窒石堂 founded in Tawei 塔尾 village near Hushi in 1927, the Huangshitang 黃石堂 founded in 1930, the Tianmatang 天馬堂 founded in Tianma 天馬 village near Huangshi in 1931, and the Qingjiangtang 清江堂 founded in Qingzhong 清中 near Huangshi in 1935.

Protestant missionaries first came to Putian in the mid 1800s. The first Methodist Church was built in Pinghai in 1865, and a second church was built in Putian city in 1867. The best known Methodist minister in Putian was William Brewster (arrived in Putian in 1890, died 1917) and his energetic wife Elizabeth, who stayed on in Putian until 1951. They founded churches, hospitals, schools, charities, printing presses, telegraph lines, local shipping companies, and clothing and noodle factories. They were active in campaigns to eliminate opium cultivation, sale and use. In 1912 a group of 300 Chinese Protestants associated with Brewster immigrated to Sarawak in Indonesia to create a New Jerusalem (known as New Xinghua) in the jungle.

Anglican missionaries built a church in Houguan village just south of Hanjiang in 1876. The YMCA began work in the Xinghua area in the 1880s. Several other denominations were active in the region in the 1920s, including the True Jesus Church, and these groups also built churches in the Putian plains.

Many of the villages listed in the survey volume as having Christian communities will not necessarily have a church, as unofficial “household churches” are widespread in Fujian and elsewhere in China. Generally speaking, participation in Christian communities requires the family or individual to refrain from involvement with village temple cults. This can be the cause of some social friction, as temple funding is raised on a per capita basis and a large proportion of the funds go to pay for opera performances. In the current situation of rapidly reviving village temple networks, it may be difficult or socially awkward to avoid contributing to these funds, especially if the individuals or families wish to attend the opera performances. Nonetheless, these families do not prepare offerings or greet the gods on procession with incense and fireworks. In only a very few instances, we observed painted signs

on the walls of homes stating that the inhabitants would not worship the village gods. In another village near Beigao we found Catholic talismans pasted on doorways or windows. In general, however, there is little outward sign of friction, and the Christian communities have been able in dozens of villages and towns to build Christian churches. The Christian churches tend to be large structures built, for the most part, in imitation of Western styles, using brightly tinted blue and green glass, with white-washed cement or tiled walls, and featuring tall spires mounted with crosses.

CHAPTER SIX

GODS AND CULTS

The survey found over 1500 differently named gods worshipped in the temples of the Putian plains. Of this number, some 300 names were variant names of gods, often revealing interesting differences of local understanding of a particular deity. This leaves some 1200 gods. This is clearly a staggering figure, and an expression of the enormous cultural complexity and creativity of the region. While a full account of all these deities, their legends, iconography, miracles, specialized rituals, and temples would require a separate volume, it is possible to propose some rough categories of analysis. Any typology of the gods is however complicated by the fact that every god is multivalent, both protective and potentially destructive. Although certain gods are closely identified with specific trades (such as Mazu, frequently called the goddess of seafarers, or Tiangong yuanshuai, in Putian the god of theater worshipped by every opera and marionette troupe), these gods also have power over a broad range of activities once they are placed on an altar in a particular temple. These gods then take charge of all aspects of the life of their worshippers, who pray to them for assistance concerning a full panoply of life's concerns including health, marriage, childbirth, schooling, investments, and the resolving of family disputes. Despite this functional multiplicity, it is still possible to create broad categories of gods, and to attempt to relate the history of their introduction into the Putian plains.

The following are the top forty gods worshipped in the Putian plains, according to the number of their statues founds in village temples.

1. Zunzhu mingwang 尊主明王 831
2. Houtu furen 后土夫人 827
3. Tiangong yuanshuai 田公元帥 500
4. Zhanggong shengjun 張公聖君 408
5. Sanyi jiaozhu 三一教主 (Lin Longjiang 林龍江) 368
6. Qitian dasheng 齊天大聖 332
7. Guanyin dashi 觀音大士 322
8. Tianshang shengmu 天上聖母 (including Mazu 嫣祖) 273

9. Xuantian shangdi 玄天上帝 228
10. Sima shengwang 司馬聖王 246
11. Yanggong taishi 楊公太師 156
12. Fude zhengshen 福德正神 145
13. Chenshi zhenren 陳氏真人 (including Tianqian shengmu 天前聖母) 135
14. Lufu yima 魯府姨媽 131
15. Guandi 關帝 116
16. Lufu dashen 魯府大神 115
17. Dutian yuanshuai 都天元帥 113
18. Taiyi xiangu 太乙仙姑 111
19. Wenchang dijun 文昌帝君 95
20. Zhang sanfeng 張三峰 95
20. Baiya jiangjun 白牙將軍 92
21. Lufu furen 魯府夫人 89
22. Liugong yuanshuai 劉公元帥 82
23. Ciji zhenren 慈濟真人 82
24. Fazhu xianfei 法主仙妃 66
25. Puji shenghou 普濟聖侯 54
26. Guangze zunwang 廣澤尊王 50
27. Cuifu dama 崔府大媽 46
28. Wulu jiangjun 五路將軍 45
29. Kanggong yuanshuai 康公元帥 44
30. Qianshi shengfei 錢氏聖妃 31
31. Wushi shengfei 吳氏聖妃 31
32. Jixiang dajiang 吉祥大將 30
33. Kuidou xingjun 魁斗星君 30
34. Wengong yuanshuai 溫公元帥 29
35. Sanguan dadi 三官大帝 25
36. Yuhuang dadi 玉皇大帝 24
37. —from 10 to 20 (several deities including Sandian zhenjun 三殿真君 and Wuxian dadi 五顯大帝)
- // Li Zhangzhe 李長者 8

If one were to look at which gods have their birthday celebrations commemorated, as in the list below, the order and frequency of the gods changes in significant ways. With the exception of the god and goddess of the *shê*, who are honored in virtually every village with celebrations, other god's have their birthdays celebrated in only about a third of the temples in which they are worshipped. In many temples,

one god may have a *xingtai* 行臺 “a temporary altar”, a table set off in front and to the side of the main altar for spirit writing sessions. Usually this indicates that this deity possesses spirit mediums. It is sometimes difficult to guess which gods of the temple actively possess worshippers, as these deities are not necessarily placed on the central altar. In the following list, one notes the relative importance of Xuantian shangdi vis a vis the other gods of the local pantheon. Note also that Lin Longjiang is celebrated less often in village wide rituals, although his birthday and date of ascension are actively celebrated in Three in One temples across the Putian plain.

1. Zunzhu mingwang 703
2. Houtu furen 700
3. Tiangong yuanshuai 189
4. Xuantian shangdi/Yuantian shangdi 163
5. Tianshang shengmu (including Mazu) 145
6. Zhanggong shengjun 144
7. Qitian dasheng 132
8. Yanggong taishi 126
9. Sanyi jiaozhu (Lin Longjiang) 115
10. Guanyin 97
11. Sima shengwang 86
13. Lufu furen 32 + Lufu dashen 28 + Lufu yima 18 = 78
12. Fude zhengshen 63
14. Yuhuang dadi 53
15. Dutian yuanshuai 42
16. Ciji zhenjun 32
17. Liugong yuanshuai 30
18. Chenshi zhenren (including Tianqian shengmu) 28 (see the list of Lufu deities above)
19. Fazhu xianfei 25
20. Taiyi xiangu 23
21. Guansheng dijun (also known as Xietian dadi) 21
21. Cuifu dama 21
22. Xuantan yuanshuai 20
22. Wengong yuanshuai 20
23. Puji shenghou 18
24. Dongyue zhusheng dadi: 16
25. Wenchang dijun 16
26. Wuhuang dadi 13

27. Guangze zunwang 10
28. Qianshi shengfei: 9
29. Xiling kong daren 7
30. Yushu dadi 1
31. Sanguan dadi 1

Some preliminary observations about this list of god cults: all the many statues of the listed deities above still make up only about one tenth of all the god statues in temples across the Putian plains. Even smaller proportions of deities receive birthday celebratory rituals. Nonetheless, rituals are conducted virtually every day in village temples across the Putian plains for the deities of the enormous local pantheon.¹

Although only a crude comparative method, the distributions of different cults mapped out below do suggest the possibility of developing even sharper analytic tools for the identification of very localized pantheons and sub-cultures. At the very least, these complex patterns of distribution of cults should lead us to treat with some caution talk of *jisiquan* 祭祀圈 (ritual spheres) dedicated to a particular deity, or *xinyangquan* 信仰圈 (belief spheres) extending to even broader distributions of followers of a particular god (Lin 1988). The term ritual sphere has been defined differently by a number of scholars working in Taiwan, but in general the concept emphasizes a comprehensive approach to all the cult centers in a specific area, and does not focus attention on a single, defining deity worshipped in the region (see the overview of these studies in Zhang 1996). Although some regions of Taiwan, where this research has been pursued, may have temples with regionally prominent deities, there are still many different deities worshipped within any one region, and their cults should be examined in relation to all the others in a region, and in terms of patterns of distribution of particular cults translocally. Clearly, this is not a phenomenon unique to Taiwan, but instead an essential aspect of most local cultures of China.

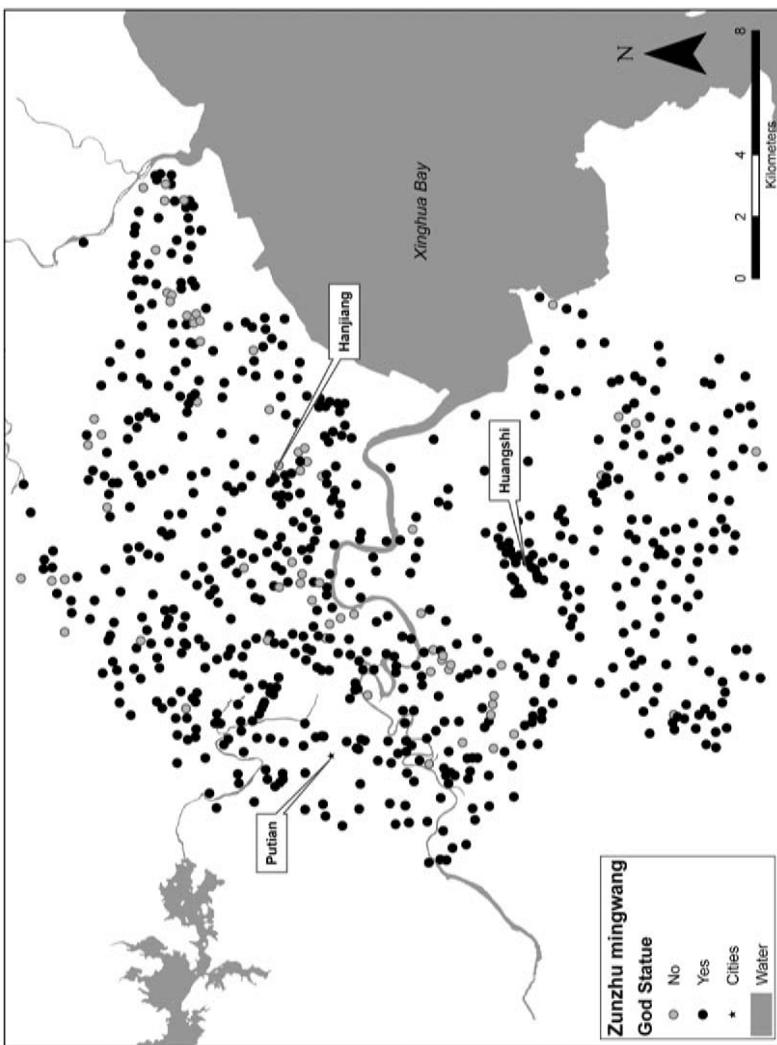
The god worshipped as *Mingzhu zunwang* 明主尊王 (the Shining Ruler, Revered King) is found in almost every village on the plain, where his presence is a mark of ritual independence. Where the god is

¹ Due to the popularity of certain gods, some villages have had to change the date of the god's birthday, in order to find ritual specialists and opera troupes who are able to perform rites and ritual opera performances for them.

absent, the village is invariably ritually dependent on an older village from which it has branched off. This god is also called the *shêzhu* 社主, or the god of the *Shê* (altar of the soil and the harvest). He is usually found alongside his wife, Lady *Houtu* 后土, in temples called *shê* or on side altars of joint *shêmiao*. One distinctive feature of the Putian pantheon is the relative rank and role of this deity. In Putian, this god is distinguished from *Tudigong* 土地公, the tutelary deity who is worshipped in most households in a little shrine set outside each house, usually on a low wall surrounding the courtyard. Both of these gods are also distinguished from *Fude zhengshen* 福德正神, another version of the earth god, who has many small neighborhood shrines (with open doors) in the villages of Putian. Thus there are at least three levels of shrines dedicated to local tutelary gods in this region, and each layer has its own history and distinct social level (the spread of individual households, the formation of neighborhoods, and the establishment of ritually independent villages). We can conclude that the cult of *Mingzhu zunwang* is connected to the spread of *shêji* altars in the early Ming, and their mutation into the independent village ritual units of the ritual alliances from the mid-Ming onwards. Thus this form of the earth god takes on an even higher status through his association with official altars and the state cult, even though this specific representation of the god has been appropriated locally for purposes of asserting village ritual independence.

This situation contrasts for example to that of Taiwan, which was settled under the Qing, when official *lishê* altars were no longer established in each *li* sub-canton, and where the official altars of the earth god were no longer as powerful a symbol to be manipulated as they had been in the early Ming. *Tudigong* shrines could be set up anywhere, as this kind of deity has a much more undifferentiated and immediate relationship with local ritual territories. The earth god in Taiwan is not a solemn official seated on a throne with imperial head-dress, but is instead the more familiar and ubiquitous figure of the old geezer with his white beard and cane, who sometimes is seen holding a bar of gold. He is firmly entrenched in the everyday life of Taiwanese neighborhoods (Dell'Orto 2004).

It is significant that some villages have more than one *shê* altar (or have multiple sets of *Zunzhu mingwang* and *Houtu furen* gods on different altars in a joint *shêmiao*), as these represent different ritual collectivities with distinct territories of the village or the alliance.



Map 29: Distribution of temples dedicated to Zunzhu mingwang and Houtu furen

Aside from these tutelary deities, Tiangong yuanshuai is the god most widely worshipped in the Putian plain, with statues in 500 temples. His legend is recounted in a ritual play performed by Xinghua marionettists, known as *Yuanxi* 愿戲 (theater of the repayment of vows). The god is the third son of the Jade Emperor. He is bored in heaven, bored by the endless bureaucracy, and longs to visit the human realm. At first he descends as a young woman, only to be accosted by a dog spirit. Reverting to his original form, he subdues the dog spirit who becomes the first of his sidekicks (the others are the lads of Wind and Fire). This dog-spirit can now be found in close to one hundred temples in Putian, where he is represented as white dog holding a flag in one hand, and is worshipped as General White Tooth (also known as General Numinous Tooth). Tiangong yuanshuai next decides to enter the womb of the wife of the Prime Minister in a home in Hangzhou. Eighteen years later the Emperor finds his Empress afflicted with illness as a result of his having sent his armies against rebel forces, unleashing killer vectors into the air. A Daoist immortal disguised as a doctor explains that the Emperor must confess his crimes by wearing a yoke, or cangue, like a common criminal. The Prime Minister suggests that his son, who has just placed third (*Tanhuayuan* 探花院) in the imperial exams, will come up with a solution. Indeed, the god has a brilliant idea, suggesting that either he, or some other officer, should wear the cangue in a substitutive act of penance. The plan works, and the empress is saved. The god then suggests that people throughout the empire should wear cangues to express atonement and that this should be supervised by the First Place Examination winner. The emperor is delighted with this plan, and orders up a banquet, where the god sings and dances, drinks and then passes out on the steps of the inner palace. There he is discovered by the princess, who teases him by painting on his bright red face black lines of crab patterns coming out of his mouth (an important feature of his iconography in Putian). The god awakens and returns home. His sidekicks point out his altered appearance, but he cannot wash off the markings. At this point he receives a summons to return to heaven. However, the Jade Emperor is enraged by his appearance, and condemns the god to return to the human realm and to perform the story of his fall from grace on stages all over the world for all time. At this point, the sponsor of the play is put into a cangue and made to join the puppets while a memorial outlining his transgressions and act of penance is read out by the chief marionettist. Finally he is freed from the cangue, which is burned along with

the memorial to conclude the ritual play. This enactment of the legend of the god condemned to perform his own story forever is the most compelling local expression of the cultural requirement that everyone must fulfill their own ritual role to the best of their performative ability. In Putian, the god of theater is the master of music and dance, as well as a powerful exorcistic deity capable of spreading as well as dispelling plague. This god frequently possesses spirit mediums in the Putian plains.

The main temple of the cult of Tiangong yuanshuai on the Putian plain is the Ruiyunmiao, just outside the East Gate of Putian city. A Qing dynasty stage has been “preserved” by being placed above a concrete stage facing the temple. Over forty temples from Putian and Xianyou counties come to present incense to this temple on the birthday of the god. This kind of cult pattern, featuring a central, founding temple, which receives incense from branch temples (through *fenxiang* 分香 division of incense, is a well-known feature of Chinese local religion (Dean 1993; Schipper 1990, Lagerwey, et al., 1994-).² However, many temples dedicated to Tiangong yuanshuai, or temples with the god as a secondary deity, are independent of this division of incense network.

The god is worshipped as the patron deity of actors. Every opera, marionette and puppet troupe carry a portable version of the god to every stage, and worship him with incense and offerings prior to each performance. For more elaborate rites, and for performances of the Mulian ritual operas, an actor dressed as the god purifies the stage with special pacings and the burning of talismans.

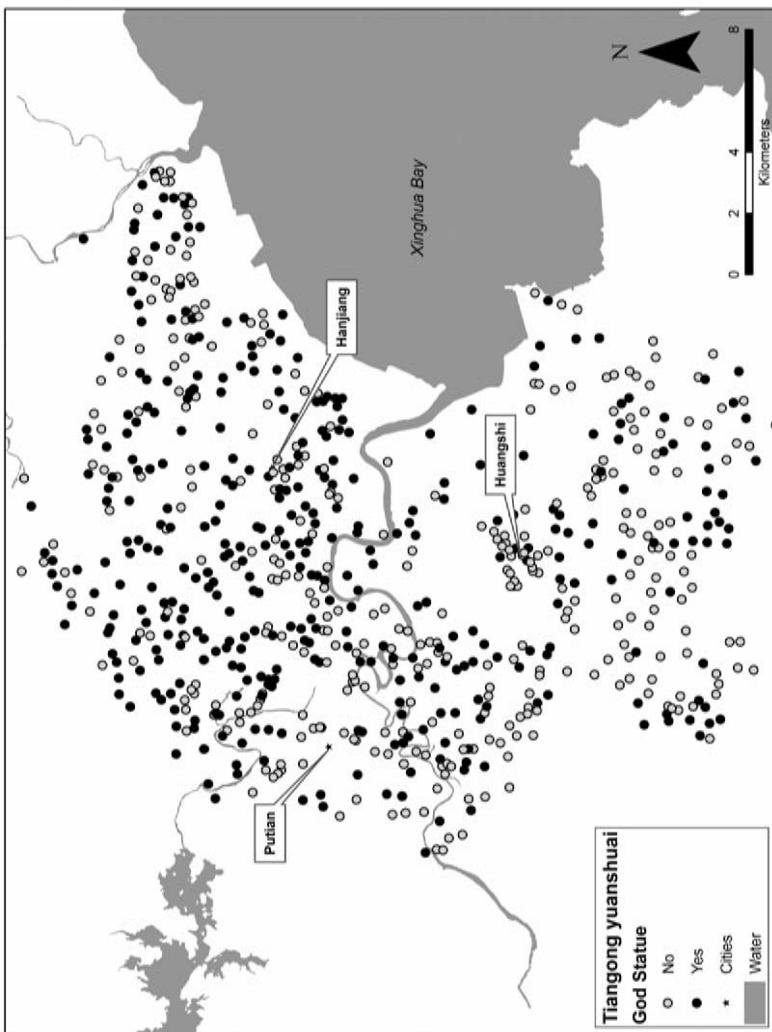
² Another common pattern involves the rotation of the statue of a god between the temples in an alliance, as in the case of Dingguangfo discussed in Lagerwey (1998). This pattern sometimes leads to the division of a temple into several independent, linked temples, as occurred in a ritual alliance near Hanjiang in the Qianlong (1736–95) period. Yet another pattern is the procession around the temples of the alliance of the gods of the commonly shared, higher order alliance temple. In the latter case, which is quite common in Putian, certain temples “receive the gods” for the night over the course of a multi-day procession. There are many historical factors underlying the hierarchies of these events, including the date of the founding temple and the history of the expansion of villages within the alliance. These factors account for issues of precedence, seniority, and sequence in processions and rituals (compare Allio 1999). The different patterns of movement within local cults can be extremely hierarchical or open to transformation. One way to generate change in such a system is by developing ever higher order temples, such as the temples dedicated to Yuhuang dadi which have been used to generate new connections across regional alliances.

Tiangong yuanshuai is also identified in local scriptures (of the Three in One) as the Commander in Chief of the Ministry of Exorcism. He is responsible for driving away plague demons, but also for spreading the plague to those who deserve it. Like many deities, he has both a protective and a destructive side.

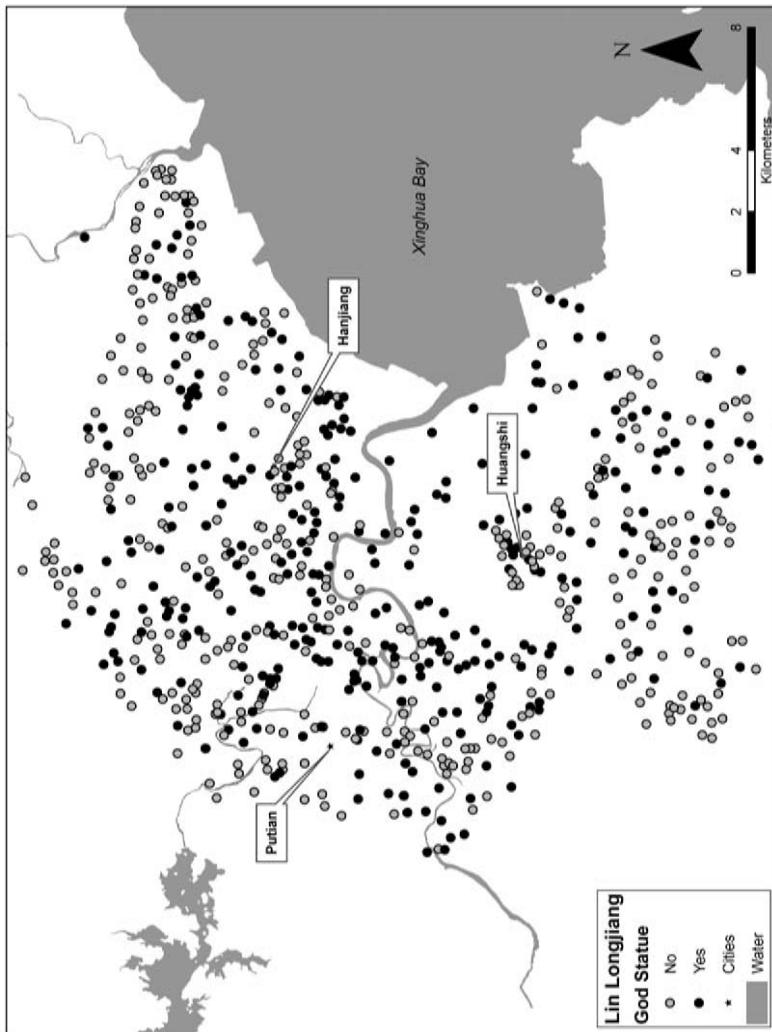
The presence of a Three in One temple is every other village in the Putian plains is a testimony to the spread of this movement dedicated to the grafting of Daoist inner alchemy and Buddhist meditation onto a Confucian basis of moral self-cultivation. Elsewhere, the spread of the Three in One within Putian is recounted in some detail (Dean 1998). Several sub-sects of the movement formed, and there are a number of identifiable sectors on the plain in which these groups are distributed. In recent years, temples within these sectors have held gatherings of all the Three in One temples in the region. Invitations are exchanged, and Daoyou 道友 (friends of the Way), or representatives from each temple attend and participate in the ritual celebrations. A very busy schedule of annual ritual activities is generated in this way, and many Three in One temples post the annual calendar of these ritual events, or at least provide a list of sites for the performance of the *Zhongyuan* or *Xiayuan Pudu* rites within a given sector of the Putian plain.

The cult of Xuantian shangdi is widely distributed across the Putian plain. The wide spread of temples dedicated to this deity is likely linked to the support of the Ming court for the god, and in Putian to the defeat of the pirate armies of the mid Ming period. This cult is also tied to the rise of merchant coalitions, and the relatively high concentration of Xuantian shangdi temples in the northeast corner of the plain (the Jiuliang region) is likely a result of the late rise of commercialism in that area. This deity, along with Mazu, is linked in many parts of Southeast China to rising merchant success. Perhaps the rise of and spread of the cult in Jiangkou can also be linked to the rapid improvement in the prosperity of this town in the late Qing and Republican periods. Jiangkou became a town in the Qing by merging several fishing villages together. Return investments started to flow into the town from immigrants to Southeast Asia in the late 19th century. In one of the temples of Jiangkou town, the new merchant elite set up a statue of Xuantian shangdi and cast out the farmers and fishermen they found no longer to their liking. These latter were forced to set up a new temple to the north of Jiangkou town.

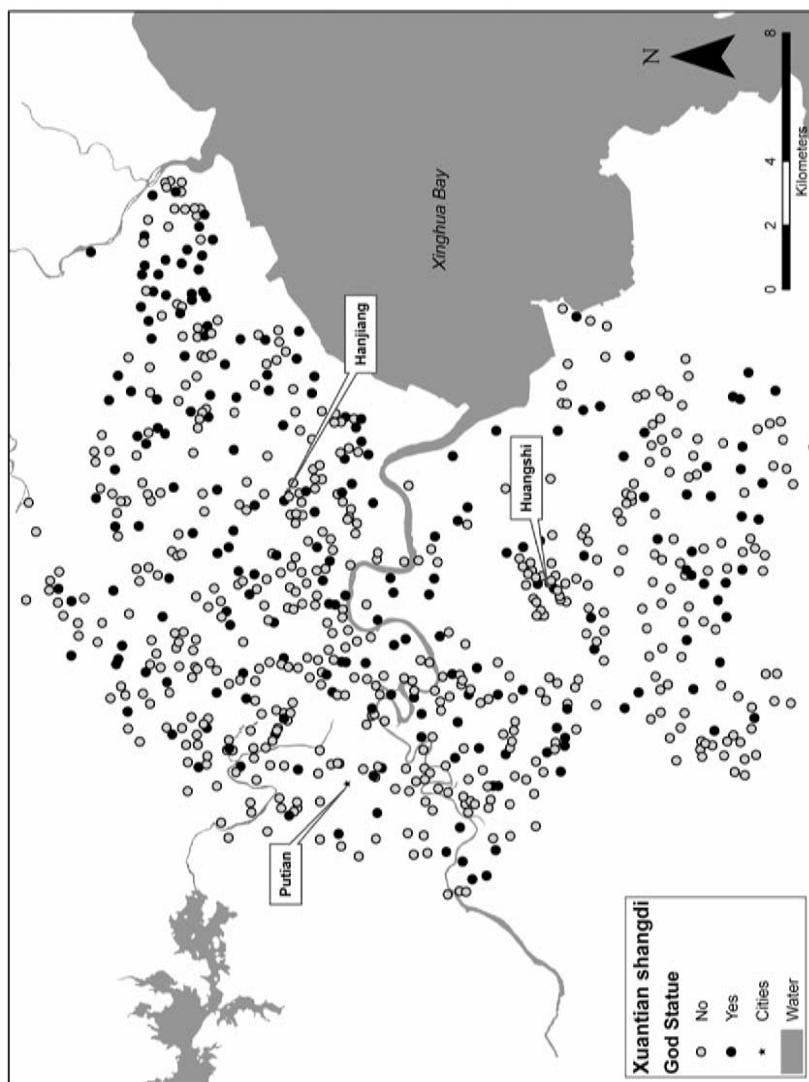
That Mazu or Tianshang shengmu (Tianhou) is worshipped in 273 temples is no surprise, as her founding temple is on Meizhou island



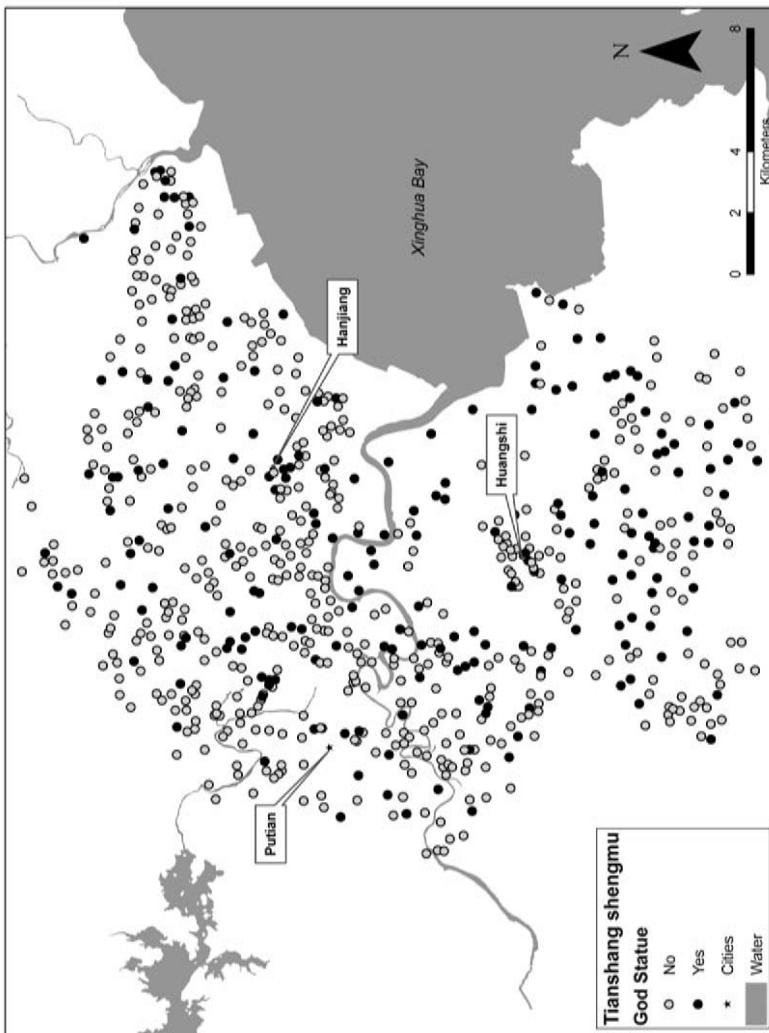
Map 30: Distribution of temples dedicated to Tiangong yuanshui



Map 31: Distribution of Three in One temples dedicated to Lin Longjiang



Map 32: Distribution of temples dedicated to Xuantian shangdi



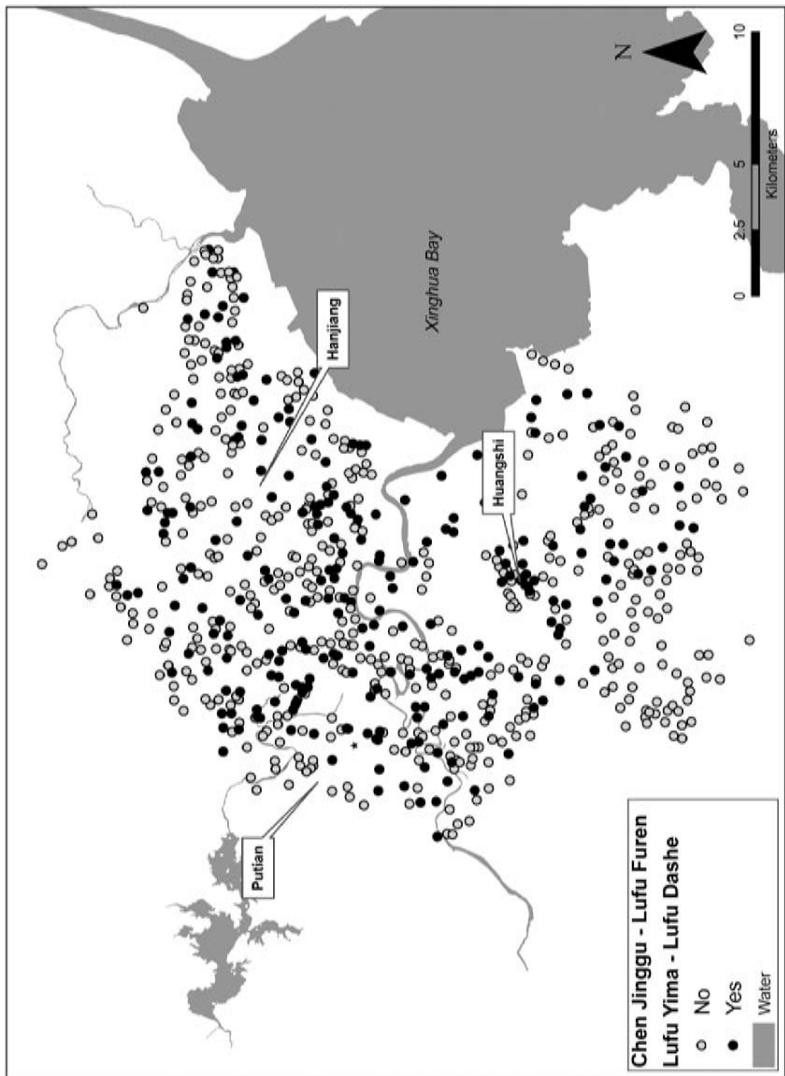
Map 33: Distribution of temples dedicated to Mazu (Tianshang shengmu)

in Meizhou Bay, just south of Xinghua Bay. Song inscriptions record her cult in Fujian. As her cult expanded and received more and more official recognition, a broader cross-section of people from across the Putian plain began to worship her. Ming and Qing frescoes outlining episodes of her legends survive in a number of temples in Xianyou and Putian (Ruitenbeek 1999). In recent years, the goddess has been dubbed the Goddess of Peace by the Taiwan Affairs Bureau in an effort to reach out to Taiwanese worshippers, who flock to the founding temple on Meizhou island. This recent political legitimacy of the cult has led to many temples in the Putian plains adding new statues of the goddess onto their altars, thus adding additional guarantees of the legitimacy of their activities (see also Jiang 1990; Watson 1985).

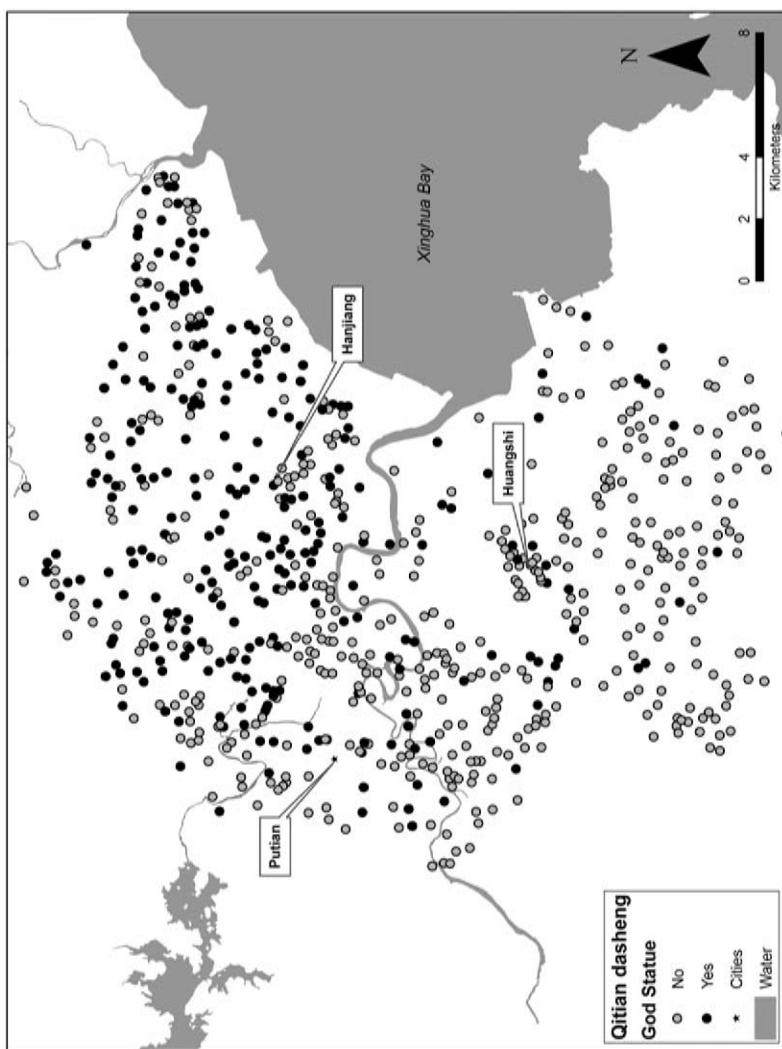
The goddess Chen Jinggu, who is commonly referred to as Tianqian shengmu, and who is often worshipped as part of the Lufu Bureau of Smallpox pantheon in many temples in the Putian plain, is a goddess from Gutian, north of Fuzhou, whose cult dates back to the Song. Her legend has been recounted above. Her legend thus links her to the fertility of Fujian region, and she is especially well known for her help to women during childbirth, or to infants threatened by disease. Local marionette ritual plays such as the Beidouxi 北斗戲 (Northern Dipper play) and the Luxi 魯戲 (Smallpox play) are performed in the Putian area, and local Daoist ritual masters can perform Smallpox *Lujiao* 魯醮 offering services in which the goddess is repeatedly invoked. She, like Zhanggong shengjun, is also worshipped as the founding goddess of a Daoist ritual tradition, known as Lüshan 閭山 or Sannai 三奶. Traces of this ritual tradition can be found in Putian Daoist traditions. For example, the *Tanban* altar associates are placed under the protection of the Lushan Dafayuan 廬山大法院.³ Her legends are recounted in many forms across Fujian and southern China, in sung invocations, scriptures, liturgies, marionette plays, *changben*, novels, murals, and even television shows in Taiwan. Elements of her legend are acted out in the rites of the Lüshan Daoist ritual tradition which flourishes in parts of western Fujian and northeast Guangdong.⁴ In Putian however,

³ Note that in many ritual texts of the Putian plains, the character for Lüshan 閭山, the mountain linked to the legend of Chen Jinggu, is written with the character for Lushan 廐山, the mountain in Jiangxi instead.

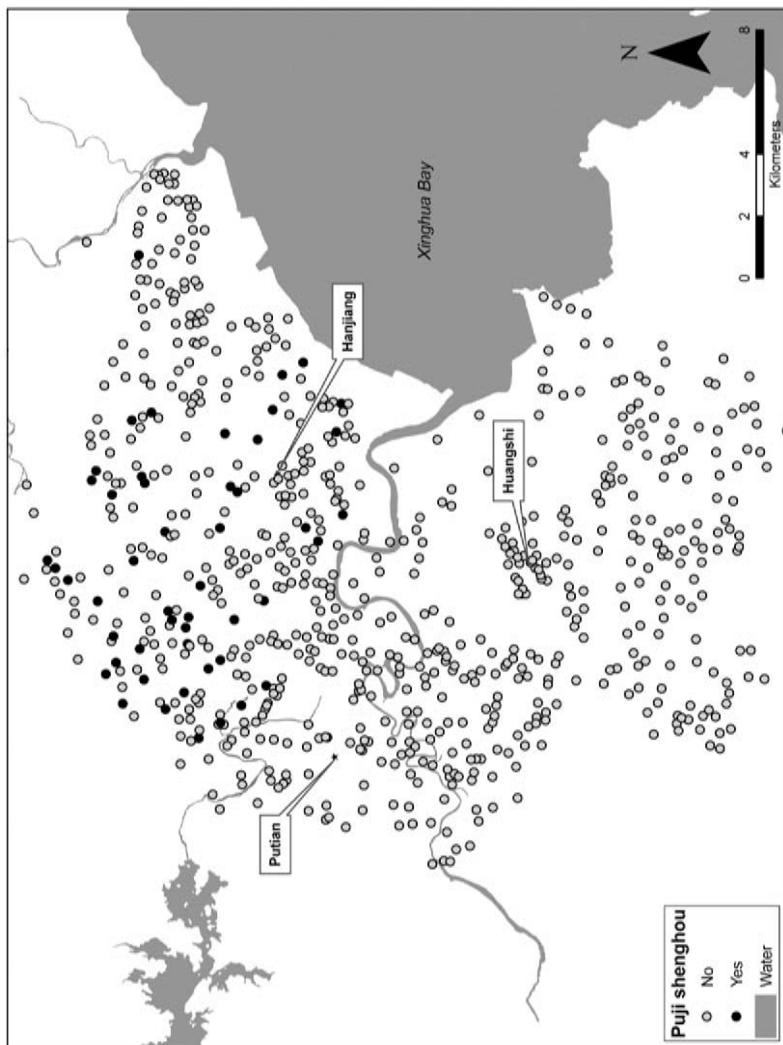
⁴ There is a growing literature on Chen Jinggu and the Lüshan ritual tradition. See the fascinating symbolic analysis of her legend, her temples, and her medium's life histories in Brigitte Baptandier, *The Lady of Linshui: A Chinese Female Cult*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008. For more information on the Lüshan ritual tradition



Map 34: Distribution of temples dedicated to Chen Jinggu (including Lufu, or Smallpox Headquarters)



Map 35: Distribution of temples dedicated to Qitian dasheng (Sun Wukong)



Map 36: Distribution of temples dedicated to Puji shenghou (Zhu Bajie)

the tradition of Zhengyi Daoist ritual is still predominant in local Daoist ritual forms.

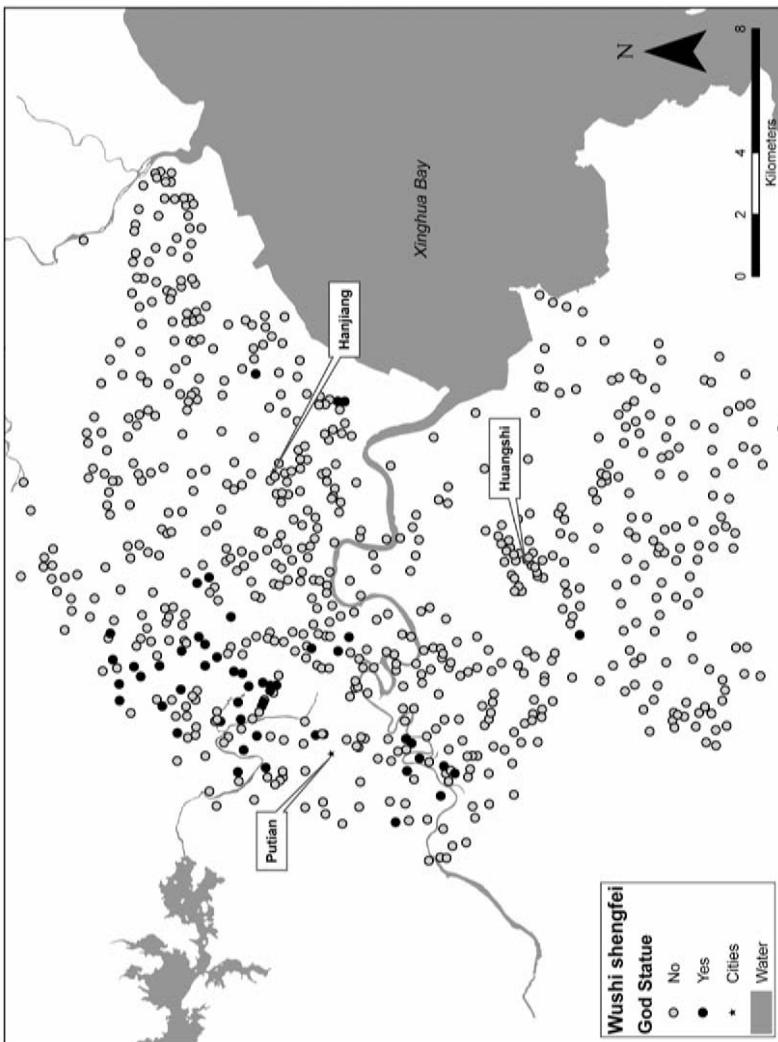
Of the gods who appear in 300 to 400 temples, we find a fierce Daoist exorcist, the local founder of the Three in One religious movement, a compassionate Bodhisattva, and an aged, but still mischievous monkey god. The widespread cult of Guanyin is a well known phenomenon across China, and the cult of Qitian dasheng can be attributed to the popularity of Ming novels and plays based on version of the *Journey to the West*, but many of the other gods all have a distinctly local inflection. The iconography of Qitian dasheng is quite unique. In Putian he appears as an aged ape with a red face and white whiskers. This god also frequently possesses mediums. Clearly a full recounting of the history of the cults and the legends and miracles of the many gods of the Putian plains is beyond the scope of this introduction. Nonetheless, one can discern the following categories of gods, and place them in a rough chronological progression in relation to changing social and economic forces.

Early cults of irrigation founders

This category includes figures such as Li Hong (Li Zhangzhe) and Lady Qian (Qianshi shengfei), associated with the Mulan Weir. The cult of Wu Xing, founder of the Yanshou Weir, is important in the northern irrigated plain. The founders of the Nanan Weir are worshipped in the Donglaisi in the Jiuliyang irrigation system near Jiangkou.

The *Map of the Distribution of Wushi shengfei* shows the temples dedicated to the sister of Wu Xing, the Saintly Maiden Wu. As explained above, she is credited with many miracles and magical acts in the area around the Yanshou Weir, founded in the 780s. Over thirty temples in that area worship her image, usually alongside other gods. Another interesting pocket of worship of this goddess is found in temples near the Mulan Weir. Perhaps these temples with images of the Saintly Maiden Wu show an awareness of the roles of Wu Xing, along with Lady Qian and Li Zhangzhe, in creating the early irrigation systems of the Putian plains.

and related ritual marionette traditions in Western Fujian, see Ye Mingsheng, 1995; 1996; 2000; 2008; Ye and Liu 1997; Ye and Wu 1997.



Map 37: Distribution of temples dedicated to Wu shengfei

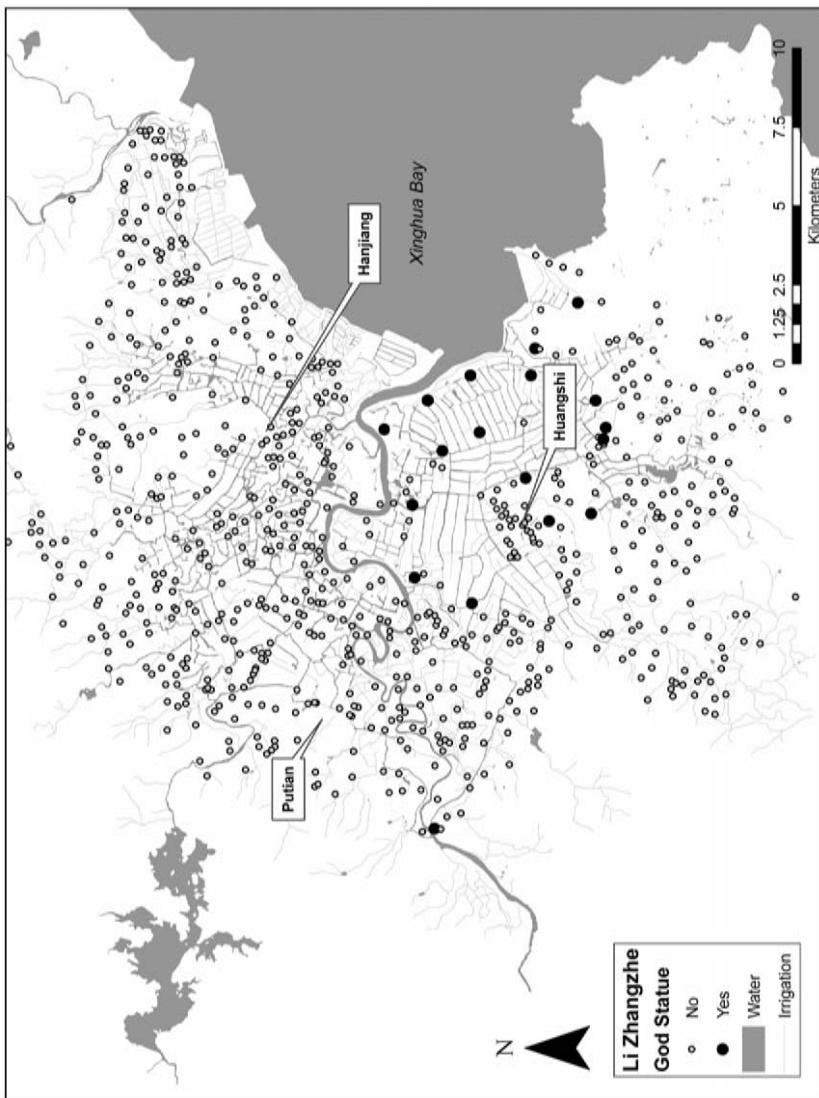
One can trace the cults of Li Zhangzhe and Lady Qian up and down the main channel of the Mulan Weir in the southern irrigated plain. Li Zhangzhe is worshipped in temples at the beginning and end of the main channel of the Mulan Weir, just beyond Huangshi town. Sites such as Dayu would have marked the shoreline in the Song, and so it is understandable that Li Zhangzhe would be worshipped in temples there. There are also statues of him in temples in several villages along the Mulan river, and in the large villages along the sea dike to the south of the mouth of the Mulan river. Both of these sets of villages are settled on land reclaimed during the Ming, thanks to secondary canals drawing water from the main channel dug by Li Hong and the Fourteen Surnames. Although the villages along the Mulan riverside, and those along the sea struggled over access to water within the southern irrigation system, both claimed the right to worship the founder of the system.

Lady Qian is also worshipped in villages all along and at the end of the main channel of the Mulan irrigation system dug in the Song on the southern irrigated plain, but there is also a separate network of temples dedicated to her as the principal deity, or with a statue of Lady Qian on a side altar, in the villages near the Mulan Weir, where her corpse is said to have floating after she drowned.

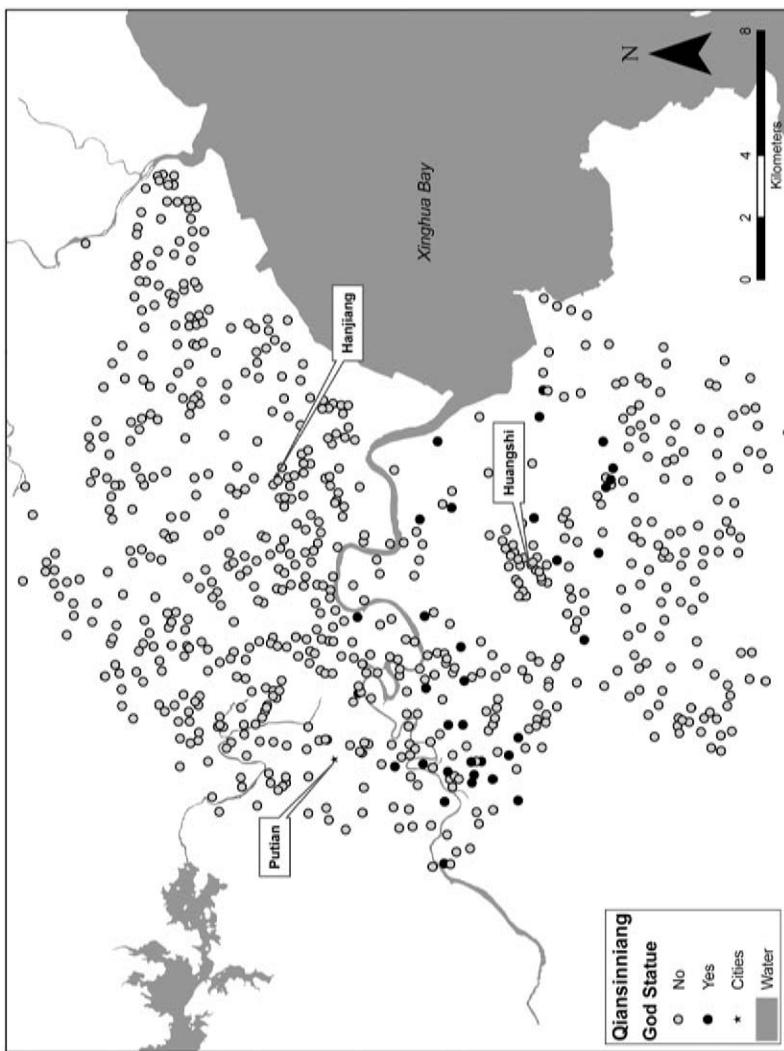
Early strata of local gods

Certain gods and goddesses have an early connection to local history and cultic life in the Putian plains. These include the goddess Chen Jinggu and her headquarters in the Bureau of Smallpox, the Lufu; Zhanggong shengjun and Fazhu Xianfei, Mazu, later promoted to Tianfei 天妃 (Imperial Concubine) and ultimately to Tianhou (Empress of Heaven), the Five Emperors Wuhuang 五皇 (widely worshipped in the Fuzhou area (Song 2006) and Tiangong yuanshuai (in his local version the cult may go back to Song times, though epigraphical materials are available only from the Ming).

Zhanggong shengjun is a Daoist exorcist who is worshipped as Fazhugong, and is considered the founder of a local Daoist ritual tradition in nearby Dehua 德化, Yongchun 永春 and Nan'an 南安. His iconography is distinctive, with a black face and wild disheveled hair (see Ye 2008). He clutches a serpent in one hand and a sword in the other. Most telling of all, he is barefoot, like the spirit mediums who



Map 38: Distribution of temples dedicated to Li Hong (Li Zhangzhe)



Map 39: Distribution of temples dedicated to Qian Siniang

are so frequently possessed by him. According to a local legend, his banner is the black banner of the feuding village alliance, while the white banner belongs to Mazu.

The earliest substratum of local legends refers to the conflicts with and conquest of the inland Shê and coastal Dan local inhabitants of the Putian region by emigrating Han communities, backed by their own gods and led by their ritual specialists. Many of the latter were early Buddhist missionaries, who subdued the local inhabitants, their gods, and their symbols through magical battles, later incorporating their magical powers and abilities. In the case of figures like Mazu, who may have been an illiterate spirit medium and most likely was a *Danmin* herself, or the bareheaded and barefooted Zhanggong sheng-jun, or Chen Jinggu and her prayers for rain, we appear to be dealing again with local, possibly non-Han spirit medium cults that have developed into more complex liturgical forms in interaction with early Daoist ritual specialists. This is a highly complex issue that will require further research. However, it is clear that the quick increase in registered households over the course of the Song dynasty involved the increasing inclusion of different ethnic groups into the Han Chinese imperial system.

Nature gods and earth gods in Putian

One might imagine that local spirits of the earth would represent the most fundamental unit of Chinese local ritual space. To some degree this is true, in that almost every house with a walled courtyard in the Putian plain includes a small shrine to the Tudigong (god of the earth), and most neighborhoods have small, open-doored shrines to a slightly higher level version of the god, Fude zhengshen. Finally, village level temples have altars dedicated to the Zunzhu mingwang and Houtu furen. However, as shown above, the particular position of these gods in the Putian local pantheon is a product of a historical process that includes imperial efforts to reconfigure local ritual practice and local mutations of these same efforts in the evolution of a new form of ritual power as seen in the ritual alliances of the Putian plain. Thus rather than assuming a structural priority to these gods of the earth, and attributing them a fixed role within an unchanging pantheon, with a set iconography and ritual practices, one must instead examine them in the light of a historically shifting field of forces including imperial

reforms and local transformations. The cult of Zunzhu mingwang and Houtu furen in contemporary Putian can be traced to the early Ming *lishê* altars. Their subsequent mutation into one of the generative aspects of the current distribution of ritual alliances is a key theme in the history of local socio-cultural organization from the mid-Ming onwards.

Official cults and local uses

Of course official cults and gods symbolizing orthodox values did play an important role in the evolution of the Putian pantheon. The *You Song Xinghuajun Xiangyingmiaoji* 有宋興化軍祥應廟記 from 1138 discussed above describes how a local god was canonized in reward for his miracles by Emperor Huizong 徽宗, and how various high officials from the Fang lineage sought to participate in and promote Confucian rites reminiscent of the ancient wine-drinking ceremony that would emphasize principles of hierarchy and social order within the communal rituals of the temple. But as Clark (2007:193) points out, the author of the stele inscription was aware that Buddhist and Daoist rites remained important aspects of the rituals of the cult. The god of this temple has long since disappeared, and the Fang lineage also gradually lost prominence in the village. Currently the village temple is dedicated to Xuantian shangdi, and the Fangs are no longer a major lineage in the village. This is just one example of the rise and fall of local cults and their associated social backers, which must have been repeated thousands of times in the Putian plains (see Clark 1995).

The Prefectural City God temple in Putian was built in 1370, as part of an empire-wide plan to establish official city god temples in administrative centers. The temple was restored by resident Daoist ritual masters in the Ming, judging by inscriptions carved in still extant stone pillars in 1631.⁵ There was both a Prefectural and a District City

⁵ These inscriptions read: Daoists Yang Daguan, Huang Zhen, Chen Zhenyuan, Guo Ji, and Zheng Xuan together raised funds to build (the hall), dated 1631, in autumn, on an auspicious day 道士楊大瑄, 黃鎮, 陳貞元, 郭稷, 鄭璇 全募建。崇禎四年歲次辛未季秋吉旦. The *Minguo Putianxianzhi*, compiled by Zhang Qin in 1945, records several restorations and expansions of the temple undertaken by Daoist ritual masters at the order of various district magistrates. These include Xiao Xihu Heyefu Daoist 小西湖荷葉付道士 who was put in charge of the incense lamps (i.e.,

God temple (both have survived, but the Prefectural City God temple was turned into a hospital after Liberation, and has only very slowly been rebuilding itself around the corner from the hospital, beginning in the mid-1990s, whereas the District City God temple, located near the northwest corner of the city, has been active since the early 1980s). In such temples, during the Ming dynasty, the Daoist ritual masters participated in orthodox imperial rites on the one hand, and on the other hand presided over a hierarchy of dozens of local temples located within the city walls of Putian.⁶ Up into the Republican period, the City God of Putian was carried in a great procession to many of the temples and neighborhoods of the city. The god also went outside the Southern and Eastern city gates to visit temples in villages clustered close to the moat around the city.

There were also City God temples in the four walled forts along the Putian coast. One of these, the City God of Puxi 莆禧, was moved during the Qing coastal evacuation, to Hanjiang, an emerging commercial center at the time. After the coastal evacuation had been lifted, the god refused to return, and so Hanjiang got a City God temple, which is still very active in the area. The City God temple management committee is made up of representatives of each of the twenty-four wards of Hanjiang town. The festivities at Yuanxiao at this temple are spectacular, as processions from each of these communities pay ritual visits to the temple, and opera performances go on for over a month. Every three years, a procession arrives from Puxi, which has rebuilt its own City God temple, but which nonetheless recognizes the historical connection to Hanjiang.⁷ Curiously, one also finds occasional City

running the temple) in 1575, Daoist master Zheng Wenbing 鄭文炳 who built a tower and added statues of the Eighteen Offices in 1606, and in the Qing dynasty in 1700, the Daoist master Yao Yuzun 姚於尊, who built a storehouse for the temple. The temple was saved from destruction under the “Destroy Superstition” campaign of 1929 by local leaders who pointed out that heroic figures of anti-Mongol resistance such as Chen Wenlong 陳文龍 were worshipped in the temple.

⁶ Taylor 1990 comments on the dual roles of the Daoist officiants of the City God temples in the Ming.

⁷ The Yuanxiao rituals at the City God temple of Puxi (a fortified town near the sea, beyond the irrigated Putian plain) include a ladder of swords fifty feet high which is climbed by a medium in trance. The medium scatters coins and talismans from the top of the sword ladder. A great procession carries the City God and its entourage through the narrow streets of the walled fort, and the *luzhu* (incense burner hosts) hold massive feasts to which scores of visitors are invited.

God temples in smaller villages—perhaps the result of spirit medium possession.

Many of the gods worshipped in the Putian plains represent qualities of orthodoxy, if not nationalism. These include Sima shengwang or Zhang Xun 張巡 (708–757), a Tang hero who died resisting An Lushan, and Chen Wenlong 陳文龍, a Song loyalist who died in 1276 while resisting the Mongols. Both serve as symbols of imperial orthodoxy in the Putian area. The former god's iconography is that of a young scholar-literati official.

Of course, Guandi, the paragon of loyalty, is worshipped in many temples. Another set of gods associated with orthodox values and Confucian academies are Wenchang dijun and Kuidou. Some of these gods are also worshipped in altars inside Three in One temples. Even Confucius and Zhu Xi are worshipped in some popular god temples.

*Mid-Ming popular gods—Qitian dasheng, Puji shenghou
(Zhu Bajie 豬八戒) and Xuantian shangdi*

The group of gods whose popularity is reflected in the popular plays and novels of the mid to late Ming include Qitian dasheng and Puji shenghou (Xiyuojì 西游記) and Xuantian shangdi (Beiyouji 北游記). In addition to these popular versions of the god's legend, Xuantian shangdi also received an important imperial cult in the Ming, and in the Putian area was also understood as interceding against pirate raids and containing the aggrieved dead. Another related deity is Yanggong taishi, the famous fighting monk brother of the Yangjiajiang 楊家將 family of warrior women who came down from Wutaishan 五臺山 Mountain to join his sisters in battle. In the Putian area he is represented as a fierce monk with golden face and bulging eyes, leaning forward and grasping a club above his head. His cult is concentrated in the southern irrigated plain, where he serves as the main god for several local ritual alliances.

Wangye 王爺 and Daren 大人 gods

Another class of deities particularly prominent in the coastal region “beyond the borders” of the Qing coastal evacuations are the Wangye gods (who both spread and dispel the plague) that are found along the coast and rivers of central and Southeast China. One of the most

prominent is Kong Daren, whose cult is centered in Houji 后積 village in Beigao township. The god is said by some to have been a Qing dynasty general who died fighting off the pirate armies. Many of the temples in these *jiewai* villages feature Daren (Great Officials) in Qing costume. Some of these may have been local commanders who protected particular villages against the pirates, or against inclusion in the coastal evacuation.

Minnan gods and regional emigration

Several gods worshipped in the Putian plains can be traced to neighboring cultural regions. These include some of the main gods of the Minnan area, often linked to emigrating surname groups who entered the Xinghua area in the mid-Ming or later. These are Baosheng Dadi 保生大帝 or Ciji zhenjun 慈濟真君, whose founding temples are near Xiamen, and Guangze zunwang 廣澤尊王, whose founding temple is in Shishan 詩山 in upper Nan'an county (Schipper 1990; Dean 1993).

Local inventions and spirit mediums

We have already mentioned above the Lu Shixian (Immortal Lu) cults of Jiulidong as an example of locally invented deities linked to spirit medium cults. That particular cult arose in the late Qing, and can be linked to the spread of Xinghua communities across Southeast Asia (see below). Similar cults have no doubt been revealed or invented repeatedly throughout the cultural history of the Putian plains. This fundamental openness to revelation of new gods and cosmological powers is one of the most significant aspects of the evolving open system of Xinghua local culture.

Clearly these categories only begin to scratch the surface of the cosmological typologies of the Putian plains. Further research will be needed to improve on this rough sketch of early cults dating to the Song, including some with quite specific functions, early Ming official cults of the City God and the earth gods of the sub-cantons which were transformed into new representations within a new “ritual power” formation, popular gods introduced by empire wide popular cultural diffusion in the mid to late Ming, local self-cultivation and ritual traditions such as the Three in One which re-interpreted the pantheon in ways appropriate to its own vision from the late Ming

through the Qing, and later cults revealed to spirit mediums in the late Qing and early Republican period. The only recently deified figure we have not yet found worshipped in the Putian plains is Mao Zedong. Cults to Mao have been reported in many parts of China, from Anhui to Zhejiang to Hunan, but so far we have not found the Chairman on an altar in a Putian temple. However, his talisman is often seen hanging from mirrors in taxicabs and minivans. His temples cannot be far behind.

Patterns of Distribution

The distributions of the gods correspond to broad cultural differences on the Putian plain. If we begin with the villages indicated as currently containing an ancestral hall on *Map 10: Ancestral Halls: including Song and Ming sites* (see *Color Plates*), we can assume that these villages may have a somewhat stronger elite literati “Confucian cultural heritage”. Let us take this as our base map for comparison with the distribution of other deities and cultural features. Note that the northeast corner of the plain, the center of the *Tanban* collective spirit medium altar associations, is very lightly affected by the presence of ancestral halls. One might hypothesize that a different and distinct set of deities would be more popular in that area. This is in fact the case, with gods such as Tiangong yuanshuai, Qitian dasheng, Puji shenghou, and the Four Marshalls Kang, Ma, Zhao, and Wen Yuanshuai making more frequent appearances in this area. Thus we can identify a sub-cultural region within the Putian plains marked by the relative absence of lineage halls and the presence of discrete ritual traditions and a particular set of deities.

As we have seen, some gods are very broadly distributed across the Putian plain, so that no correlation can be found with a specific regional sub-culture. This is true for the distribution of Zunzhu mingwang and Houtu furen, the god and goddess of the *shê* altar temples of Putian. They are found in virtually every village that is a self-sufficient, independent ritual unit. The cult of Lin Longjiang (founder of the Three in One movement) is also very widespread, and is found in approximately half the villages of the Putian plain. Other widespread cults are those to Tiangong yuanshuai and Chen Jinggu. In the case of Tiangong, one notes a denser distribution in the northern irrigated plain, and especially around Jiangkou, which may indicate this god's

propensity for spirit possession. Tianshang shengmu is widely distributed as well, but note that there are more of her temples in the southern plain, which is closer to her mother temple on Meizhou Island. Major cults like those of Zhanggong shengjun also seem to be fairly evenly distributed, but note that the cult of Yanggong taishi is more densely located in the southern irrigated plain.

Some gods are clearly identified with specific regions. The cult of Li Zhangzhe and Lady Qian is restricted to the southern irrigated plain. By contrast, the cult of Wu xianfei, the sister of Wu Xing, founder of the Yanshou Weir irrigation system of the northern plain, is found only on the northwest sector of the plain, near the Taihe temple of Wu Xing. Turning to Qitian shenghou and Puji Shenghou, or as they are better known, Sun Wukong and Zhu Bajie, we note a quite strong distribution in the northeast sector of the plain. In the case of Zhu Bajie (Puji shenghou) there is almost no overlap with the distribution of ancestral halls. However, the cult of the gluttonous pig is also not that widely followed in the Jiangkou area, which has grown wealthy due to remittances from Overseas Chinese emigrants. The Monkey and the Pig pair are found together mostly in the temples of the poorer inland hill country of the northern plain.

CHAPTER SEVEN

TEMPLES, MONASTERIES AND PROCESSIONS

Buddhist monasteries and Daoist temples

An exhaustive list of Buddhist monasteries, pagodas, and nunneries is included in the *Putian zongjiaozhi caogao* (1991). According to this source, there were 656 Buddhist monasteries, nunneries and halls in Putian and Xianyou after 1949. After the Cultural Revolution, only 382 buildings were left (89 monasteries and 293 nunneries and halls). Since 1980, 343 of these have been restored. The lists in the *Caogao* provide the names and locations of 218 Buddhist sites in the Putian plains, along with the names of over sixty monasteries that have disappeared.¹ These are distributed as follows (by township): Chengxiang, including Putian city: 58; Hanjiang 24, Wutang 9, Xiatianwei 16, Jiangkou 20, Huangshi 38, Quqiao 30, Beigao 10, Hushi 10—the numbers for Jiangkou, Beigao and Hushi are approximate, as these townships contain large areas outside the irrigated plain).² Almost one

¹ This draft of the gazetteer was never published. About half of the monasteries that have disappeared did so over the past centuries for a wide variety of reasons. The other half vanished after 1949, and especially during the Cultural Revolution. The final published version of the gazetteer, the *Putian xianshi*, 1994, included only half of this information. Unfortunately, the section in the draft volume on Daoist temples is not nearly so thorough, reflecting the definitional confusion discussed in Chapter Two above, and the lack of an active organization working for the cause of the reclamation of local temple properties. Only some sixty temples are listed, and while these include a few with early Daoist affiliations, the majority are distinguished more by their local prominence than by any relation to Daoism. In general, local gazetteers of all ages provide very sketchy information on local temples. Very few can be relied upon for anything close to a comprehensive survey. Only the most important temples in terms of official recognition, local power, historical significance or scenic beauty are listed. Some gazetteers go so far as to explain that their editors (such as the editor of the [Kangxi] *Ningxia xianzhi* gazetteer) have worked to improve the language of the stone inscriptions found at these temples. The recorded inscriptions in the gazetteers almost invariably omit the financial contributions of various patrons.

² As these sources sometimes provide information the survey team was unable to gather, we have added information from this list into the survey below (indicating in each case that their information is drawn from the *Putian zongjiaozhi caogao* (1991)). We have also drawn from a survey list drawn up by the Three in One religious movement of their temples and the numbers of initiates in each temple. These figures could

third of these Buddhist temples were built in the Republican period. These lists also record the date of restoration or rebuilding of many of these monasteries in the 1980s. These restorations were the culmination of a process of the reclaiming of property rights from the government, after the temples had been converted into warehouses, if not torn down, during the Cultural Revolution. In some cases, funding came from Overseas Chinese Buddhist temples associated with the founding monastery in Putian. During the late Qing and up to the late 1950's, monks from Putian were sent to Southeast Asia to set up subsidiary monasteries. Several of these monks, or their disciples, were active in the restoration process.

Currently, an impressive number of large Buddhist monasteries can be found in the mountains surrounding the Putian plains, or occasionally in an open area between irrigation canals in the fields in between villages. These include the Guanghuasi 廣化寺, founded in 558, and located near the south gate of Putian, the Guishansi 龜山寺, founded in 822, in Huating township, the Nangshansi 囊山寺, founded in 875, at the center of the rim of mountains on the north side of the Putian plain, the Meifengsi 梅峰寺, founded in 1104 in Putian city, the Gufengsi 鼓峰寺 founded in 1127 several kilometers to the west of Jiangkou, and the Shishisi 石室寺 to the west of Putian city. Inside Putian city there are several newer Buddhist monasteries. One large Buddhist temple located closer to the villages is that near the village of Huangxiang 黃巷, the Guohuan chansi 國懽禪寺, which is dedicated to Miaoying fashi 妙應法師, one of two brothers from the Huang lineage who are said to have attained enlightenment during the Tang dynasty.

Within the villages, a large number of Buddhist halls or pagodas are dedicated to Guanyin 觀音. These are positioned by the sides or on the mid-way point of bridges, recalling the role of Buddhist monastic estates in developing the infrastructure of the Putian plains. In addition, lay Buddhist groups have set up numerous shrines to Guanyin, and Shijia mouni 釋迦牟尼 is worshipped in a smaller number of Buddhist temples. In villages like Longhua 龍華 in the southern irrigated plain, where the entire population was said to have been vegetarian in the past, a dozen Buddhist lay temples complexes remain active to this

not be verified by the survey team, but are included with an indication of their source in the Survey volume.

day. Three in One temples also frequently include statues of Guanyin, Rulai, or Shijiamouni as part of their syncretic worship. Guanyin also can be found in the back hall of many local village temples.

Many small nunneries have been set up in the villages of the Putian plain by elderly female Overseas Chinese patrons. These are tended by one or two nuns, who support themselves with handicrafts, and who often raise abandoned girls from the village. As these are private shrines dedicated to the worship of the founding patron, other villagers seldom enter, and the nuns and children live almost invisible lives. In some villages in recent years, much larger and sometimes quite ostentatious Buddhist monasteries and nunneries have been built, usually with Overseas Chinese funding.

As for Daoist temples, the term is no longer relevant in Putian, as nowadays Daoist ritual masters work out of their homes, where they have altars dedicated to Daoist deities. The main Daoist temple in Putian was the Yuanmiaoguan 元妙觀, which was built in 1009. The temple was originally named the Tianqingguan 天慶觀. Various imperial plaques and honors were bestowed on the temple in 1017. In 1119 Emperor Huizong bequeathed a stele in his own calligraphy renaming the temple the Shenxiao Wanshougong 神霄萬壽宮.³ This stele is still preserved in the stelae garden behind the temple. The temple was repaired in 1407, and again by Daoist masters Fang Rudiao 方汝調 and Li Zhisheng 李志升 in 1556. Further repairs took place in 1564. The temple complex included a Dongyueguan 東嶽觀 (Temple to the Eastern Peak) and a Wuxianmiao 五顯廟 (Five Manifestations Temple), along with a Xiyueguan 西嶽觀 (Western Peak Temple), a Wenchang Temple, and a temple dedicated to Xuantian shangdi that was built due to the efforts of a Daoist master named Chen Maorui 陳茂瑞. A famous mural displaying 100 scenes of the tortures of the Underworld were painted in western corridors of the temple in the Qing by Wu Zhongxi 吳仲熙. By 1907, parts of the temple were converted into a modern style school. In 1930, the entire temple was taken over and used by the local government as office buildings. The paintings were covered with boards. Nowadays, only the Dongyueguan Temple of the Eastern Peak remains, and it has been converted into the Putian Historical Museum.

³ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 11, p. 9. An illustration of a rubbing of this stele is included in this volume.

The other great Daoist temple of Putian city was the Wanshou-gong 萬壽宮 Daoist temple built in the 1314 in the Yuan dynasty at the behest of Yantieshi 鹽鐵使 Commissioner of the Salt and Iron Monopoly Fang Guangweng 方廣翁. The Sanqingdian 三清殿 (Hall of the Three Pure Ones) was the main hall of the temple. This hall is still preserved in a middle school (where it serves as the school library). The hall is an important example of Yuan architectural history.

As in other parts of China, Daoist ritual masters would also have had centers in the City God temples and at the Temples of the Eastern Peak outside Putian (Taylor 1990). In recent years, Daoist Association offices have been set up at the Dongyueguan (Temple of the Eastern Peak) of Jiangkou and at the Beichengong near Huangshi.

The functions of the village temples

Contemporary temples in the Putian plains serve as cultural centers and centers of political and economic decision making. Each village has its own system of selection of members of the temple management committee. Most rotate in new members based on criteria of age, marital status, and sometimes the birth of male children into the man's household. A few of these men are selected each year as the *Fushou* 福首 (fortunate headsmen) who will play a major role in both organizing and acting in the rituals of the year. Financial considerations enter into the picture, as the *fushou* often are expected to pay for feasts, offerings, rituals, and operas during their tenure. In many villages, people are so eager to perform these functions that they will borrow funds from family and friends in order to afford the honor. In some villages, selections are made by dropping divining blocks and waiting for the indications of the gods. Many villages give honorary membership in the temple committee to *xianglao* 鄉老 (village elders)—which may mean any man over fifty-five or sixty. These temple committees select representatives who participate in higher-order temple committees, which resemble United Nations assemblies of temple representatives.

Temple committees are responsible for fund raising, organizing the ritual event, security and the maintenance of order during the event, liaison with local government and public security, invitations and hosting of visiting delegations and performing arts troupes, hiring of ritual specialists and opera troupes and ritual musicians, mobilizing the village population to participate in the processions of the gods,

which involves preparing costumes, banners, god's umbrellas, and god's sedan chairs (which can cost a small fortune when intricately carved out of sandalwood and covered in gold leaf), the organization and sometimes the training of local spirit mediums, coordination of offerings, accounting for all income and expenditures, and provisioning everyone with food, tea and cigarettes, and appropriate gifts. Each of these tasks is complex. For example, raising funds for the ritual involves paying visits to each household ahead of the ritual event to collect a small per-capita donation, and the raising of voluntary contributions from wealthy villagers, local companies, Overseas Chinese relations, and even from associations that represent the "floating population" of workers and laborers from outside the province. Some temples rent out shops or have other forms of property. Some have investment accounts at local banks.

Annual expenses of a temple cover the costs of daily maintenance, the costs of *yuanxiao* and *lanpen pudu* rituals (1/15 and 7/15), and the costs of birthday celebrations for the gods. Some temples post annual accounts, others post accounts for specific events as they take place. Certain temples even have printed sheets listing each household by name and leaving spaces for contribution amounts. There are of course many more expenses involved in the construction or repair of a temple, and subscription sheets allow villagers to sign up for the support of specific items in the new temple (columns, beams, carved windows or pillars, lanterns, and lintels.).

Average expenditures for a ritual event have grown over the past three decades. These range from small temple celebrations with incomes of several hundred yuan to larger temples bringing in several hundred thousand yuan annually. A comprehensive analysis of these figures is being prepared. Based on several hundred temple account posters gathered in the mid 1990's, the average personal contribution per ritual event was around 20 yuan. Many other social groups and units also made contributions, from households, to production brigades, to ritual territories, to ritual associations (shares), to factories, to Overseas Chinese. Contributions range from small per capita amounts to substantial donations in the hundreds of thousands of yuan. A rough average cost for smaller birthdays of the gods at that time was in the range of three thousand yuan. Some special rites cost much more. One ritual held at the Beichengong (Temple of the Northern Asterism) near Huangshi in the mid-'90s cost over 40,000 yuan, with 18,000 going to the first performance in decades of the Mulian

ritual opera by human actors. Even more spectacular *guanjie* collective spirit medium training rituals which go on for over a week have in recent years involved expenditures of approximately 400,000 yuan.

Roughly two thirds of the funds raised for most ritual events are used for the opera performances. An opera troupe may have forty members. The pay per day in the 1980's and early 1990's was approximately 1000 yuan, providing about 25 yuan per performer. Currently, fees have gone up considerably, with top opera troupes charging several thousand per day. The minimal wage in the 90's was 15 yuan (\$2USD) paid to a manual laborer to dig ditches or build roads or houses. Such workers are now almost exclusively migrant workers from outside Putian and Fujian. Opera performers could expect 40 to 50 yuan or more a day, making this profession a steady source of income in the area. Official printed posters from the local Bureau of Culture list some sixty authorized opera troupes and warn against hiring unregistered troupes (and avoiding the Cultural Ministry tax on opera performances). Other locally produced advertisements point to a thriving business in opera school training and apprenticeships.

Other typical costs include funds for the ritual specialists (usually at least 80 yuan for a single ritual master, but sometimes up to several hundred yuan for a more elaborate ritual involving several ritual masters). Funds for tea and cigarettes, noodles and food, oil for lamps and incense and spirit money are common features of these posted accounts. The cost of electricity for the broadcasting of the opera (or movies) and the public relations loudspeakers, not to mention the lighting for temples and floats, is another common item on the accounts.

In their posted annual and specific ritual expenses, temples often note any excess remainder. These funds are shown to have been spent on projects including scholarships for outstanding students in the village, charity to the destitute, burials for those who could not afford them, the laying of electrical lines in the village and the establishment of some street lights, the laying of roads up to the temples and through parts of the village, the construction of public toilets and other sanitation projects, the carrying out of irrigation maintenance (dredging or cleaning out debris from irrigation canals), and other public projects. Occasionally one finds posters announcing very large donations, in the hundreds of thousands of yuan, to disaster relief in another part of China (after floods along the Yangzi river, for example, or the earthquake in Sichuan).

From the range of these expenses, one can see that these temples have become major players in terms of developing local infrastructure. Over the past fifteen to twenty years, local governmental agencies have devoted most of their resources to larger scale infrastructure projects—urban renewal, major highways, new railways, large-scale irrigation projects. Funding for these projects comes from provincial and national agencies and from loans from international agencies such as the World Bank. Local funding is raised from taxes (increasingly on factories and businesses, as the agricultural tax has been abandoned) and even more from the appropriation and sale of public resources—since all property belongs to the state and is only leased long-term (usually for seventy years) to the villagers, the local government can impound any building or property deemed necessary for state purposes, or build a road or send a railroad through any village it wishes. This has led to all kinds of potential for corruption—expropriation of certain properties rather than others, and sweetheart deals with local developers to take over appropriated village lands. Taxes from business and factories are quickly absorbed upwards into the provincial and national coffers, leaving local government scrambling to find funds for salaries for their officials. Thus local governments have little funding for village based projects, and the temple committees have filled an important void in the local political economy.

Processions

Village temples in Putian organize impressive processions of the gods over the *Yuanxiao* festival and on the birthdays of the gods. These processions have been described briefly above. What follows is a series of excerpts from an anonymously written 2002 temple gazetteer, outlining the procession of Tianshang shengmu (Mazu) at the Lincigong temple (*Lingcigong Tianshang shengmu xunyouzhi* 灵慈宫天上聖母巡游志).

The preface explains that the last great procession of the Heavenly Goddess Mazu took place in 1930, and that now, seventy years later, on the cusp of the millennium, in an age of one country with two political systems in which scientific marvels were being accomplished, and in order to spread Mazu culture and encourage Overseas Chinese from Hong Kong and Macao to return to the homeland, and to aid

world peace and national unification, the temple had divined an auspicious date and determined that on the eighth, ninth and tenth day of the seventh lunar month of 2000, for three days, they would hold a procession of the Heavenly Mother to bring great good fortune to all. This procession would be the greatest ever—its scale would exceed anything hitherto seen. They planned to have fifty motorcycles lead the way, followed by eighty decorated motorized carts, then 303 ponies, then drum and cymbal troupes and traditional instrumental ensembles, then nine popular performing arts troupes including the tea gathering women, and many other performing arts troupes. In all there would be a total of over 2000 participants in the procession, which would stretch for five Chinese *li*. This procession would include so many vehicles, horses, fluttering banners dancing in the sky, drums and music shaking the firmament, that the people walking along the way would form a never ending stream of bodies. The beauty and majesty of the procession would resound through three townships. This would be the most immense, most spectacular, most solemn and most colorful religious activity in the history of the temple. Throughout the procession was to be protected by the Goddess, who would be escorted by various divine generals, and the organizers of the event who would maintain good order, and would be assisted by the enthusiastic groups who received the Goddess on each of the three evenings, so that the event would run smoothly, bringing peace and harmony to the region.

The remainder of the gazetteer is devoted to outlining 1) the itinerary of the procession, listing each village and temple visited; 2) the sequence of the procession, with the groups that open the path, the Great Official, the Placard with the Goddess' greetings, the Placard to Open the Way, the Great Gong, the General Who Opens the Way, the Clear the Way Banners, the Great Banner of the Great Official, the Lanterns of the Great Official, the multiple banners, the divine horses. Next comes the Headsmen representing seven ritual organizations. Then come women sweeping the way, then the palanquin bearing the incense burners, then the Great Official and his horsemen, and the Great Official, followed by a band of musicians with great shawms and gongs. Next come the Eight Attendants, dressed in Qing yamen court runner's black robes with rattan hats, next comes the Dragon head troupe, followed by the Dragon of linked lanterns, then performing arts troupes, then Female Generals mounted on horseback, then the Goddess' palanquin, then the Placards of the Sun and the Moon, then Mazu's Banners, then a nine-tiered umbrella, then the traditional musical ensemble of the temple.

The gazetteer next itemizes all the things that must be done before the procession, many of which involve set phrases recited while erecting a flag pole, or carrying out other ritual actions. Seven Daoist ritual masters are invited to conduct rites, and marionette plays are performed. While the Goddess is away from the temple, an altar of the Five Peaks is set up, and a banquet laid for a high official. The Eight Officers of the temple make their shouted salutes morning and night at the temple. For three days a light feast is prepared and for five evenings a large feast is consumed. Each day of the procession a group carrying a lantern, a gong, and a clacker patrol the streets and call out the hours. On the second day of the procession nine Daoist ritual masters perform rites in the temple. Oils lamps of destiny are arrayed around the altar.

The subsequent section of the gazetteer itemizes the decoration of the temple. Next we find a description of the costumes of the Female General (who wears a hat and carries a sword), the Officers of Yin and Yang (in black and white), the temple committee members in blue robes with black fedoras, the officers of the Central Command in red robes, the Warrant Officers of the Procession in red, the Great Official in gold with red whiskers, the Seal Bearer in purple. Next we find descriptions of the General Who Opens the Way (in martial dress with a great halberd), the Office Staff in court dress, the Wardens and Runners in official dress, the Banner Lad in Song costume, and the Eight Officers (in black robes with red sashes and rattan hats), and the Executioner with his long rod for administering beatings.

Next we find a list of the all the leadership units along the procession and their various functions (secretariat, finance and accounting, security, general affairs, purchasing, safeguarding, miscellaneous, external liaison, collection of monetary offerings, liaison with the government, health and sanitation, and the leaders of each of the village temples that are visited during the procession. Then we find the list of the *Fushou* (headsmen of Good Fortune) of the procession.

Finally we find a list of contributions, starting with a gift of 5000 Singapore dollars from the branch Lingcigong Temple in Singapore. Other major nearby temples also make large gifts, including the Longshangong 龍山宮 Temple (4200 yuan), the Tongjigong (2000 yuan), the Lingyinshè 靈隱社 (2000 yuan), the Xianglong fushè 香龍福社 (2000 yuan), the Xinxian Chenghuangmiao 新縣城隍廟 (500 yuan). Next are listed individual and group contributions, including 1000 yuan from the Temple Committee of the Longshangong Temple, 500 yuan from a shoe factory, 600 yuan from another shoe factory, 560

yuan from another temple, more gifts from other temples, 200 yuan from a noodle factory. Next comes a list of ritual artifacts contributed by individuals, including Mazu's carved sedan chair (a major gift!), the embroidered banners, hats for the goddess, the Sun and Moon Placards, and other items. Next we find a list of those who have contributed additional days of opera performances.

The next section lists the rhymed couplets that were used in the procession, followed by several communications received from the Goddess. The first message outlines the appropriate offerings that each household should prepare to greet the Goddess on her procession: these include fresh flowers, clear tea, fine wine, long life noodles, rich dishes, and offerings of money to the temple. The next two messages offered blessing to all the offerings and people of the region. The final message promised to forgive the transgressions of all the members of the temple community, and to bring peace and prosperity to all, including Overseas Chinese, students seeking to pass exams, businessmen seeking their fortune, young people seeking a good marriage, people concerned about their health, people with business with government officials, people involved in disputes, people who had married and sought children,—all these and more would see their dreams come true.

This was followed by the Placard That Opens the Way, outlining the route of the procession. Next follows the text of the shouted salutes of the Eight Officers of the Temple, who are told by their leader that the Goddess is planning to go on procession—they shout out salutes to each of the main officers of the procession and to the *Fushou*. A group of demon dancers in masks perform a mute dance in which they move the Jinxiangpai 進香牌 (Placard of Advancing and Offering Incense) forward and back before each temple that is visited. The Wardens and Runners are commanded to obey their orders. The Eight Officers conclude with a series of hoots in response to their leader's signals. At lunch time, this series of calls and responses is repeated, the Standard Bearer reads out a proclamation, the Village Elders offer incense and bow repeatedly, and a single Daoist ritual master performs a brief rite. The procedures for evening installation of the Goddess at her temporary headquarters in a guest temple are similar. The Goddess is fitted out with a bed, new shoes for her bound feet, tea and refreshments.

The gazetteer goes on to provide some historical information on the temple, which was founded in 1406 as a small shrine, but which was enlarged the following year after making a pilgrimage to the mother

temple on Meizhou Island. The temple was enlarged again in 1568, and another pilgrimage was made to Meizhou. In 1719, the temple fell on hard times, and each of the villages involved with the temple decided to set up their own branch *shê* temple. Nevertheless, they all considered the Chongfushê 崇福社 temple, which had been built in the Yuan dynasty as their mother *shê* temple. The Lingcigong 靈慈宮 Temple was finally restored in 1904–1907, and once again a pilgrimage was made to Meizhou to collect incense fire to consecrate the newly restored temple. The temple survived the early years of the PRC government, setting up a school inside but preserving the statue of the Goddess as well. During the campaign to Destroy Feudal Superstitions, the Goddess twice was kept safe in the homes of villagers. Sadly, there was no escape for the Goddess during the Cultural Revolution, when the statue was destroyed. Only a single hall was left of the temple. Finally in 1980, a leader of the Singapore branch temple of the Lingcigong offered to assist in rebuilding the temple, and permission was given in 1982. An elderly Huaqiao 華僑 was sent to Singapore to bring back 26,300 Singapore dollars for the rebuilding of the temple, which was completed in 1985. In 1992 further improvements were made, and the work was completed by 1996. In 1997 the temple requested and received official registration from the government. In preparation for the great procession, the temple leaders went to Meizhou in 1998 to bring back a golden statue of the Goddess, which was taken on the Great Procession of the year 2000. All of the six ritual territories of the region joined together to ensure the success of this great undertaking.

Temples in relation to modernity—relocation and urbanization

“Urban renewal” has led to the elimination of almost every trace of traditional architecture in Putian and Hanjiang cities, with the exception of a few temples, monasteries and historic buildings. The new concrete apartment blocks are covered in shiny white tiles. As the boundaries of urban regions like Putian and Hanjiang continue to expand rapidly, surrounding villages are being razed at an alarming rate. Whole villages are flattened to make way for new ring roads and apartment blocks built on speculation. Many villagers complain that their compensation packets are inadequate. Those who refuse to move are ultimately evicted by force. Often villagers are moved into

second rate apartment blocks where their entire way of life is no longer sustainable.

Whether in a new urban setting, or in the villages, the temples provide public spaces for the collective ritual activities of the community. These open squares are used in the villages to dry grain after the harvest. These public spaces do not add up to a collective (and abstract) public space of civil society such as that described for post-Renaissance Europe by Jurgen Habermas. They remain resolutely local, even when the scale of the collective ritual takes in many thousands of participants. In this important sense, they represent a second tier of local government which is not necessarily in opposition to the official local government.

Usually the last buildings left standing in a bulldozed village are the temples. These temples are the focus of long, drawn out negotiations over compensation and new sites for the temples. Local officials appear to respect local conventions to the degree that they are unwilling to offend the local gods- and the entire village population—by unilaterally tearing down temples. One recently moved and rebuilt temple posted its compensation at 650,000 yuan. In the case of Kuokou 閑口 village to the east of Putian, ancestral home to many of the Chen lineage of the area, all six temples of the village have been moved and built in a row in between banks of apartment buildings. To the north of the city, temples from the Yanshou Weir area have been moved up the mountainside overlooking the Weir and arrayed in a row of eight temples. In the Nanmen southern gate village area which is now the main bus station for Putian, small local *shè-miao* temples stand in between apartment blocks, close to their original locations. The ritual processions of this neighborhood are still very active, with six different *shè* ritual associations organizing troupes of young men to run with palm-leaf sedan chairs around bonfires set in the courtyards of the apartment buildings in front of local neighborhood temples. All six troupes converge in front of the main temple of the region, where they perform and race around six great bonfires to the accompaniment of music and endless firecrackers. This area of the city is amazingly similar to a Taiwanese city neighborhood on the day of the celebration of a local god. Most of Putian City has however lost its neighborhood temples and sense of local community.

CHAPTER EIGHT

LINEAGE AND TERRITORIAL CONNECTIONS

Current distribution of surname groups in Putian

Currently, the distribution of the most common twenty-six of over one hundred surname groups in the villages of the Putian plain is as follows: Chen 陳 are found in 320 villages; Lin 林 240; Huang 黃 184; Zheng 鄭 150; Wu 吳 115; Li 李 104; Zhang 張 76; Cai 蔡 61; Liu 劉 60; Weng 翁 51; Fang 方 44; Guo 郭 40; Zhu 朱 38; Xu 許 37; Wang 王 33; Zhou 周 31; Yao 姚 27; He 何 25; Peng 彭 21; Su 蘇 19; Xie 謝 18; Yu 余 14; Cheng 程 14; Kang 康 12; Ou 歐 11; Song 宋 10. The current distribution of several of these lineages is mapped out in *Appendix One* below.

These numbers do not discriminate between separate lineages or distinct lines with the same surname, so they only provide a rough measure of the relative size of different surname groups. In some cases, district-wide or pan-prefectural lineage genealogies were drawn up, mostly in the late Qing and even in modern times (this is the case for the Huang and the Zhu). Such efforts to link ever more broadly distributed surname groups into a common lineage requires ever deeper (and less and less likely) historical claims about common shared ancestors linking the various lines of groups with the same surname.

In all these cases, we find an early ancestor, an initial place of settlement, often a division into lineage branches, and a distribution of the descendants of different branches in different villages. In some surname groups, other lines of descent with the same surname moved into Putian at different times, leading to some confusion. Efforts to link together such disparate lines were a fairly late phenomenon. Note however that many villages were multiple surname villages, with only a minority having full-fledged ancestral halls. Thus many villagers would have lacked such highly elaborated centers for ancestral worship, and would have had to carry out their rites either in older ancestral homes or in their own homes, where the scope of ancestral worship may have been far more limited than in a fully articulated ancestral hall.

Currently, many lineage halls have begun to revive ancestral worship rituals on the Winter Solstice, and support the sweeping of ancestral

graves on the Qingming festival. It is difficult to say whether any lineages now carry out a full range of ancestral worship rites such as those described in the *Putian Fushan Dongyang Chenshi zupu* 莆田浮山東洋陳氏族譜 [*Lineage Genealogy of the Chen Surname of Fushan in Putian*] of Jiaqing 22 (1817). There we read of elaborate rituals performed for the ancestors in the ancestral hall and at the many widely scattered gravesites of various ancestors. On the anniversaries of the deaths of the founding ancestors, elaborate and highly formalized rites of offering and sacrifice were carried out in the ancestral hall. Younger lineage members were selected to act as *Lisheng* 禮生 (Masters of Ritual) in these rites. Great care was taken to emphasize seniority and hierarchy in the order and scale of offerings, in the formal bows and prostrations made before the ancestor's spirit tablets, and in the distribution of food after the ceremony. The *Family Regulations* of the Chen lineage genealogy mention that seven lineage members were to be selected each year to act as *Fushou* 福首 (headsmen of good fortune) to carry out offerings to the tutelary god of the nearby Haopushè temple. A fund had been established by the lineage to ensure that these ritual responsibilities would not prove too difficult for any particular *Fushou* to bear. Lineage representatives were also expected to participate in the Rites of Universal Salvation for the Hungry Ghosts (*zhongyuan pudu*) that were held each lunar 7/15 at the Buddhist temple in the village which had been built with lineage funds. The founding of the Haopushè 濠浦社 temple of the earth god in Dongyang village during the Ming Jiajing (1522–1566) period is explained in a stone inscription included in the lineage genealogy. Clearly this was not an official *lishè* altar established at the beginning of the Ming, but was instead a symbol of the power and influence and ritual independence of the Chen of Dongyang. The *Family Regulations* also include a provision calling for one of the *Fushou* to pay an annual visit to a *shè* temple in Putian city which had branched off from the Haopushè, in order to collect a contribution acknowledging the primacy of the Dongyang founding *shè* temple.

While many historical connections between lineage and *shè* temples and Buddhist monasteries can be seen in the case of the Dongyang Chen lineage, the contemporary example of the Huang lineage of Shiting may be used to examine more recent interconnections between lineage and territorially based god cult worship in the Putian plains. During a *Yuanxiao* ritual held in the semi-repaired ancestral hall of the Huang in Huangxiang in the late 1990s, representatives from each

family came to the hall to worship in turn, and were then presented with lanterns and offerings which they took to their homes. These rituals were presided over by lineage elders. However, a Daoist ritual master had also been invited to escort the gods of the village temple to each household in turn, and the god's statue was later set up inside the ancestral hall, where it remained throughout the individual family worshipping and the distribution of lanterns. The god was none other than Huang Miaoying 黃妙應, the Buddhist saint and ancestor of the Huang lineage from the Tang dynasty, worshipped at the nearby Guohuan Chan Buddhist monastery.¹ This mix of ritual traditions resembles the situation described in the Nantai suburbs of Fuzhou by Szonyi (2002). There too one finds lineage ritual subsumed within the cult of the gods.

Case Study of Lineage and Local Temples in Shiting Village, Jiangkou

Aside from the ancestral hall at Huangxiang, which was mentioned in an interesting early inscription by Zhu Xi, the main settlement of the Huang lineage is in the Shiting area.² A brief overview of Shiting village's history and its main lineage and temples will be provided here, followed by a detailed case study of the relationship between lineage segments, neighborhood temples, and emerging new ritual movements and new neighborhood temples. The reader should be forewarned that this kind of "local knowledge" can get somewhat bogged down in details. The point of the case study is to see how lineage branches, which once lived in separate neighborhoods, now have scattered across the Shiting area. The neighborhoods now find greater coherence as ritual associations dedicated to different gods.

Shiting is located in Jiangkou township, at the northern edge of Putian county, on the Jiuliyang plain, facing the sea and with mountains behind. Water for paddy fields, cooking, drinking and washing was drawn from the channels and canals of the Nanan Weir 南安陂 irrigation system, which takes its water from the Qiulu 萩蘆 river which flows past Jiangkou into the sea. This irrigation system

¹ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995, Nos. 82, 173, 254, and 336 all discuss this monastery and the Buddhist saint.

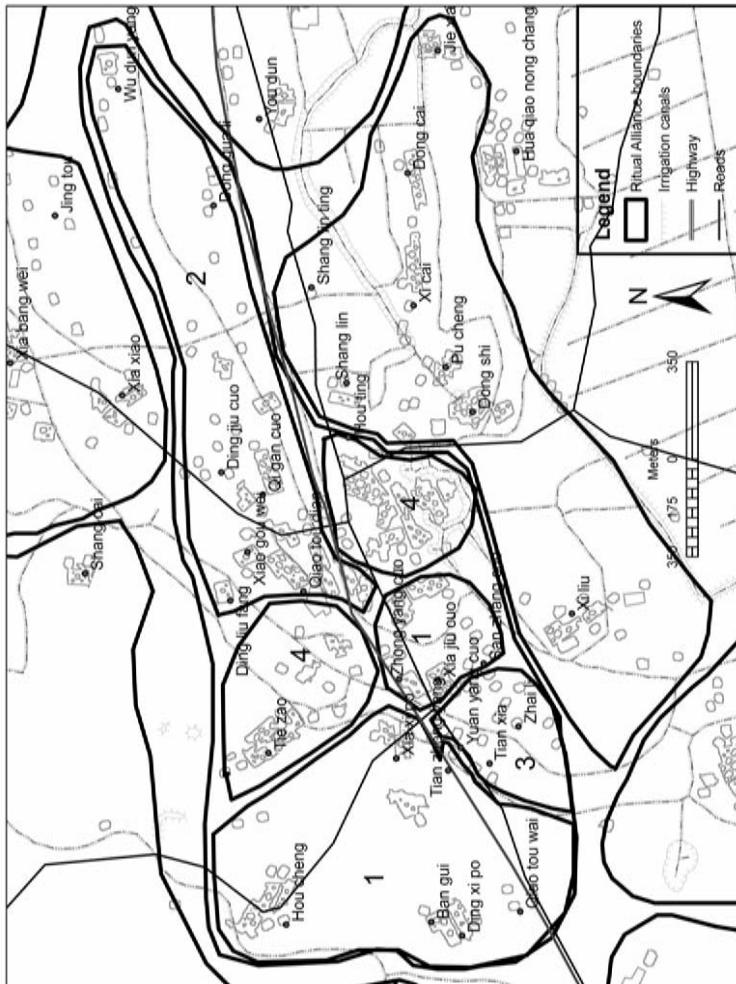
² Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995, pp. 30–31, see discussion in Clark, 2007:273–275.

was begun in 977, but at that time it watered only 100 *qing* of land, mostly at the base of the mountains behind Shiting. Prime Minister Cai Xiang 蔡襄 repaired the irrigation system, but in his day most water for irrigation was drawn from two large reservoirs. In 1145 the Putian District Magistrate Wang Kanggong 王康功 expanded the irrigation system to irrigate 20,000 *mu* (over 3000 acres). This made it possible to reclaim further land from the sea, flush the salt from the fields, and convert them into paddy fields. New villages spread into these reclaimed lands. In 1442 the Putian Prefect Liu Pin 劉玭 agreed to the request of Huang Da Sanxiu 黃大三秀 of Shiting, and again greatly expanded the irrigation system.

Legend has it that in the Ming Chenghua period (1465–1487), the Chief Minister of the Court for Imperial Sacrifices 太常寺卿 Huang Benqing 黃本清, also from Shiting, took on the repairs to the irrigation system, but miscalculated the number of stone slabs needed for the project by over 9000 pieces of stone. He requested that the leftover slabs be laid into a road reaching from Jiangkou to the center of Shiting. The road stretched for Nine *Li*, giving the plain its name (Jiuliyang—Nine *li* plain). This road became an important thoroughfare uniting the plain, and it was also the postal road, and included pagodas for welcoming and seeing off official guests.

Shiting is located between the upper and the central main channel of the Nan'an Weir (Jiuliyang) irrigation system 南安陂上沟和中沟. This area was part of the Yongfengli 永豐里 sub-canton. Shiting is an nowadays an elongated super-village combining several formerly separate villages into one continuous settlement, which is currently managed by both the Shidong 石黃 and the Shixi 石西 Administrative Villages. The current population is over 10,000 people, but its population of Overseas Chinese living abroad is over 20,000. The vast majority of the people are of the Huang 黃 surname group. There used to be the Liu 劉 and the Fang 方 surname groups, but these surnames no longer exist because they either moved away or changed their surnames to Huang.

The Huang came to Shiting village from Huangxiang 黃巷 in Hanjiang 潛江 during the Yuan Dynasty. According to the *Huang Lineage Genealogy*, the founding Fujian ancestor of the Huang had the taboo name of Hu 虎 (Tiger), and was born in Dongxiang of Putian city, where he became a *Liansheng* student. “During the reign of Emperor Shundi of the Yuan (1333–1368) he went to the town of Huangzhai 黃宅. He is said to have reclaimed land near there from the sea and



[Map 40: *The Four Jia subdivisions of Shiting village* is based on combination of our survey GIS maps, the Shiting map from the *Shiting Huang Lineage Genealogy*, and the *Map of the distribution of settlements in each Jia* hanging in the Huang Ancestral Hall.]

Map 40: The Four Jia Subdivisions of Shiting Village

built a sea wall around it. He built a home and resided there, and this place was known as Shiting 石庭 (Stone Courtyard)."

In the fourth generation, the lineage divided into four branches, namely Gongqi 公啟, Gongmo 公謨, Gonglie 公烈, and Gongzhuo 公著. At this time the lineage first became large. In the eighth generation, one Songjuzhe: 松居者 "built a shrine to the ancestors... and donated lands for the sacrificial rituals." Clearly at that time a relatively large lineage organization had developed. The descendants of the Gongmo branch were the most numerous, while the line of Gongzhuo has died out. The Gongmo branch has further divided into the Wenlian 文廉 and Wenchang 文常 branches, so that there are still four major branches of the Huang lineage in Shiting. Currently, Shiting village is divided into four ritual territories, the Damenjia (1) 大門甲, (2) Zhonghuajia 中華甲, (3) Houcuojia 後厝甲, and (4) Houtingjia 後亭甲. The Huang lineage ancestral hall had collapsed but was rebuilt in 1987. Lineage rituals have been revived. However, the Huang ancestral hall is jointly managed by the Shiting Temple management committee. The organization of its lineage ritual is paralleled by the organization of its temple rituals.

- 1) Damenjia 大門甲 includes Sanzhangcuo 三張厝, Zhongyangcuo 中央厝, Qiaotouwai 橋頭外, Tianzhongyang 田中央, Dingxipo 頂西坡, Xiaxipo 下西坡, Bangui 半圭, and Houcheng 後埕 villages.
- 2) Zhonghuajia 中華甲 includes Dingjiucuo 顶舊厝, Xiajiucuo 下舊厝, Wudunyang 吳墩洋, Xiaogouwei 小沟尾, and Qigancuo 旗杆厝 villages.
- 3) Houcuojia 後厝甲 includes Zhaili 寨里 and Yuanyangcuo 鴛鴦厝 villages.
- 4) Houtingjia 後亭甲 includes Houting 後亭 and Tiezao 鐵灶 villages.

The four *Jia* were originally the four major branches of the Huang lineage, all living in separate regions. The Damenjia 大門甲 is also called the Qiansuofang 前所房, and is made up of the descendants of the Gongqi branch. The Houcuojia 後厝甲 is also called the Zhongjian 中間房 Branch, and are the descendants of the Gonglie branch. The Houtingjia 後亭甲 is also called the Gongsuo fang 公所房, and are the descendants of the Gongmo branch. The Zhonghuajia 中華甲 is also called the Sijianfang 四澗房, and originally consists of the line of the Gongmo branch with the most descendants. However, after the Gongzhuo branch died out, they were sent to replace this branch. Nowadays

however, the descendants of these different lineage branches no longer live in their original neighborhoods. Instead they all live mixed in with each other. Note in the *Map 40: The Four Jia Subdivision of Shiting Village*, that Damenjia (1) is divided into two separate areas, as is Houtingjia (4). Both of these *Jia* lineage branches are now broken up and dispersed into two distinct locations within the greater Shiting area.

The dispersal of lineage branches into different neighborhoods is even more extensive than the sub-division of one or two *Jia* into separate territories would suggest. According to the contribution sheets posted during the *Yuanxiao* festival of 1992, there were 1992 males who belong to the Damenjia, of whom 122 lived in Zhongyangcuo 中央厝, 632 in Qiaotouwai 橋頭外, 98 in Tianxia 田下, and 326 in Sanzhangcuo 三張厝, with another 205 living in villages of Houcuojia, including Houcuo 後厝 and 202 more in Yuanyangcuo 鴛鴦厝 (also in Houcuojia). Thus over one fifth of the males of the Damenjia lineage branch lived outside their original territorial boundaries, inside the region of another *Jia* lineage branch.

On the other hand, several smaller subsections of the various residential neighborhoods are in fact completely made up of subdivisions of one or another branch of the lineage. Thus a single *Jia* (ritual territory) might be divided into several different lineage branch residential clusters. The maps in the *Huang lineage genealogy* and the *Map of the distribution of settlements in each Jia* hanging in the Huang Ancestral Hall reveal some of these intricate inter-relationships, and suggest that lineage organization continues to underlie the temple ritual order in Shiting village.

The Shitinggong 石庭宮 and its Fuxingshè 福興社, located in Shixi 石西 village Xiajiucuo 下舊厝, is the overall main temple of the four *jia* 甲 of Shiting. The main gods worshipped are Sandian zhenjun 三殿真君, Zunzhu mingwang 尊主明王 and Houtu furen 后土夫人. The secondary gods are Fazhu xianfei 法主仙妃, Haotian dizi 吳天帝子, Liugong shenghou 柳公聖侯, Jingong shenghou 金公聖侯, Huiji shenghou 惠濟聖侯, Baiya jiangjun 白牙將軍, Gongying tongzi 供應童子 and Fenghuo erlang 風火二郎. The Shitinggong has a Temple Management Committee and an Overseas Chinese Development Committee. This temple has a *Tanban* (spirit medium altar association) with a membership of over fifty people, and it has held many *guanjie* spirit medium training sessions.

Each year during the *Yuanxiao* festival each *Jia* in rotation invites the temple incense burners to *xingdao* 行道 (visit each household to

carry forth the Dao). On lunar 6/1, the four *Jia* come together to celebrate the birthday of Sandian zhenjun 三殿真君 and Baiya jiangjun 白牙將軍. The birthdays of the other god are celebrated separately within each *Jia* neighborhood. For example, the birthday on lunar 3/9 of Huiji shenghou is celebrated by the Houtingjia 後亭甲, while the birthday of Haotian dizi on lunar 8/23 is celebrated by the Zhonghuajia 中華甲. The birthday of Fazhu xianfei is celebrated on lunar 8/21 by the Damenjia 大門甲, and the birthday of Jin Shenghou is celebrated by the Houcuojia 後厝甲 on lunar 10/11. Thus each of these different neighborhoods (of mixed lineage branches) worships different gods within the main temple, and then invites that particular god back to their own neighborhood. Moreover, each time an intercalary lunar fourth month occurs, the Haotian dizi 夏天帝子 (Tiangong yuanshuai 田公元帥) is taken on a procession to each *Jia* ritual association.

In recent years certain sub-branches of the Huang lineage have organized new god's birthday rituals, with the apparent intention of setting up a fifth *Jia* ritual organization in addition to the original Four *Jia*. This indicates the potential for transforming a lineage based ritual system into a temple based ritual order. However, these new ritual groups still participate in the ritual activities of the original Four *Jia*, and still participate in overall rituals according to their original positions within the lineage system. Thus even though there has been a clear trend within Shiting towards the reorganization of the ritual order into a territorial system based in neighborhoods with mixed lineage branches, the development of these trends still operates under constraints imposed by the lineage organization as a whole.

While lineage organization still places some limits on the development of god cults in Shiting, in other villages in the nearby Jiangkou region, the different *jia* neighborhoods are named after different gods, rather than representing different branches of a particular lineage. In many villages, lineage rituals have been largely abandoned, if they existed in the first place, and the principal mode of local social organization is the cult of the gods (for further discussion of the trend towards the territorialization of cults in this area, see Dean 1998).

Of course, there are many other neighborhood temples in the dozen villages that have merged into the greater Shiting village, further complicating the question of the interaction between lineage and territorial cult (see the full description in the Survey volume). Moreover, in addition to territorial temples and lineage branch rituals, there are many voluntary ritual groups within the Shiting area. Most of the temples

in Shiting have organized *Tanban* Altar Associations of spirit mediums, who undergo *guanjie* training sessions. Each of the gods of the temple has a spirit medium whom the deity can possess during rituals. As these roles are lifelong, in the past a new set of mediums was trained every second generation, with the elder generation of mediums passing down the techniques of trance, collective dance steps, incantations and chants, and spirit writing. In addition to participating in the rituals of the village temples, the *tanban* Altar Association often has its own temples, known as Dong 洞 Caverns or Dian 殿 Palaces. In Shiting village the main *tanban* temple is the Jiulidong 九鯉洞. Other such temples in the area are the Wenyuandian 文元殿 of Jiucuo 舊厝 (located just behind the Jiulidong temple), the Mingandian 明安殿 of Jiucen 舊岑, and the Rimingtan 日明壇 of Yuanyangcuo 鴛鴦厝. Each of these groups worships different sets of deities, and have divided on this basis into Lushanjiao 廬山教, Qiongyaojiao 瓊瑤教, Jinlunjiao 金輪教, and other sects. As will be seen in the next section, networks of temples have branched out of Shiting across Southeast Asia. Here again the links between lineage and temple networks are complex.

Several Three in One temples are also active in the Shiting region, including the Zhiyuantang 志元堂 of Shanglin 上林, with over 100 initiates, the Fuxingtang 福興堂 of Sanzhangcuo 三張厝, and the Yumingtang 玉明堂 of Qiaotouwai 橋頭外. These temples worship Lin Zhao'en, founder of the Three in One, and many of his disciples, as well as other popular deities. Their rituals are quite complex. These groups have also spread to Southeast Asia, as can be seen in a recently carved 50 foot long stone inscription at the Zhiyuantang Temple in Shanglin village within Shiting, translated in Appendix 2 below.

This case study reveals the complex interconnections of lineage and neighborhood temples, and voluntary ritual traditions and their temples within one large village on the Putian plains. The next chapter examines the transnational networks that spread out of Shiting village temples across Southeast Asia.

CHAPTER NINE

TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS

Several networks connect the villages and ritual alliances of the Putian plains across national boundaries with emigrant Xinghua 興化 temples and communities in Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei. These phenomena provide an alternative perspective on the sources of local cultural and ritual change in China. The vital importance of Southeast Asian trade networks for the local cultures and economies of Fujian for centuries has been confirmed by many historical studies (Clark 1991, 2007; So 2000, Vermeer 1990, Ng 1983, Lombard and Aubin 2000). Historians of Overseas Chinese have also long remarked on the importance of native-place associations and chambers of commerce in the evolution of Chinese dominated mercantile networks across Southeast Asia (Purcell 1966; Wang 1991, 2000; Lim and Gosling 1988; Reid 1993, 1996; Cheriot and Reid 1997). Considerable attention has been paid to secret societies and self-protection associations that developed amongst the Overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia (Ownby and Heidhues 1993; Ownby 1996; ter Haar 1998; Yuan 2000). Less attention has been focused on the key role in the development of these communities of communal Chinese temples and ritual events, or of extended and mutating lineage organizations linked to certain temples which spread across several nations (but see the work of Lombard and Salmon 1980, and Franke, et al., 1980–97).

Recent scholarship has highlighted the central role of Chinese spirit mediums within Chinese community temples and ritual events in negotiating the forces of modernity in Penang, Malaysia (DeBernardi 2004; 2006; see also earlier work on Chinese spirit mediums in Southeast Asia by Elliott 1966, Cheu 1988, and Heinze 1997; for a historical perspective on Chinese spirit possession consult Davis 2001). The best of this kind of research carries forward a line of inquiry centered on the performative aspect of spirit possession in its confrontation with the pressures of social class, ethnic difference, and the forces of capitalism (Lewis 1971; Sahlins 1988, Tambiah 1970, Kapferer 1983; Weller 1994; Morris 2000).

Open and Closed Chinese villages revisited

Skinner (1964–65) sought to break out of the image of the Chinese village as utterly isolated, which was common in village studies in the 60s, by suggesting a continuum of relations to the outside world. One can, however, question whether his model of the village as being open or closed based on political factors such as the cyclical dynastic dynamics, or his other model of the village as an element in a regionally delimited central-place marketing hierarchy worked by macroregional economic flows,—whether either of these models fully describes the *transnational villages* of the Putian plains (Levitt 2001). To put the question another way, the variables of Skinner’s open model would have to be expanded to include the impact of transnational flows of people, ideas, capital, and cultural innovation and exchange. Similarly, his diagrams of the local networks of Thai Chinese elites (Skinner 1957, 1958) would have to be expanded to include their multiple links back to specific villages in the Chaozhou region of China. This is not to question Skinner’s achievements, but to point out the limits of the period in which he conducted his research in China and Southeast Asia. A longer historical perspective can build on the insights and models developed by Skinner to re-position Chinese villages and temples in specific transnational networks that have developed over the past 500 years. Ethnographic research can follow revitalized networks to gain new insights into their forms, structures, and processes, and the spaces they open up for the participants in the networks.

Different networks linking Putian to Southeast Asia are connected through one or more of the following sites or nodes (a node can be a village, a social institution or religious group, or an individual): 1) Village affiliation—ties to a nodal “village of origin” in Putian; 2) extended lineage—based in localized lineage nodes in Putian; 3) overseas branch temples of a god cult with its founding temple in Putian; 4) spirit medium ritual traditions emerging from Putian ritual traditions and temples; 5) sectarian movements—temples of the Xinghua based Three in One movement abroad; 6) Buddhist religious affiliations: monks with ordination temples or founding temples in Putian or lay followers of such monks and temples; 7) Christian communities led by church leaders from Putian; 8) independent “self-governing villages” of fishermen and smugglers.

Now, with the possible exception of the Christian communities, an individual within any of these nodes could be involved in all the oth-

ers—a person who was born in a village in Putian might have been raised within one of its lineages, worshipped at one of its temples dedicated to a local god, and voluntarily participated in a spirit medium group based in another temple in the village. This person could also have participated in the activities of a third village temple dedicated to the Three in One movement, and also have had some connection with a nearby Buddhist monastery—for example, this person might have been dedicated to Guanyin by his or her parents, offered up as the god's godchild in return for special protection.

Turning now to Southeast Asia, one finds the following nodes:

- 1) *Tongxianghui* 同鄉會 (there are four different Xinghua tongxianghui in Singapore, and over 20 around Malaysia). Most contain a Tianhougong (Temple of the Empress of Heaven) dedicated to Mazu, Tianshang shengmu. Many are linked to or evolved out of common occupational associations. In the case of the Xinghua (Henghwa) people, this was the transportation industry. Many early Tongxianghui were linked to Bicycle associations, including the offices in Penang, Taiping, Ipoh, Kuala Lumpur, Klang, Kuching, Sibu, Miri, Malaysia, and in Singapore;
- 2) *Tongxinghui* 同姓會 (the Shiting village Huang lineage shrine in the Dongtiangong 東天宮 of Seremban, Malaysia, or the Shiting region Wang lineage hall in the back room of the Zhaohuimiao 昭惠廟 in Singapore);
- 3) Branch temples: we have already mentioned the Tianhougong connected to the Xinghua Huiguan; Another major Putian temple is the Dongyueguan based in Jiangkou. There are two Dongyueguan in Medan, Indonesia, and another massive Dongyueguan temple in Kuching, Malaysia;
- 4) Three in One temples are found in Penang (now a general temple), Klang (with two important temples), Kuala Lumpur (the Sanyitang), Seremban, Johor (Jurongtang), and Singapore;
- 5) Buddhist temples in many parts of Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore can be linked to founding temples in Putian, such as the Guanghuasi and the Guishansi (restored by Abbot Zhenjing 真經 of the Jingyesi 淨業寺 in Muar, Malaysia);
- 6) independent, self-governing communities such as the “self-governing fishermen villages” of Kuching and formerly of Malacca. These communities have another set of Tianhougong temples, also dedicated to Mazu. These were groups of the fishermen and perhaps

smugglers who moved along the coast of Borneo, to Java, to Malaysia, and probably back up the Southeast Asian coast to Fujian. They formed local bases of operation that remained fiercely independent. In Kuching they have built an extraordinary “self-governing fishing village” made up of impressive modern bungalows and mini-villas;

7) Christian churches were established in Sibu, Malaysia, founded as part of a New Jerusalem in Borneo by the Methodists. This community was carved out the jungle by Christian families from Fuzhou, led by Wong Naisiong (1849–1924). The first waves of Fuzhou immigrants were joined in 1912 by a over a hundred members of the Putian church, under the leadership of Reverend William Brewster. Brewster appointed Pastor Cheng Bingzhong to lead the community to Sibu, and they still have an active role in the church and the community there.

Returning to our imaginary Putian villager mentioned above as a participant in many overlapping religious spheres in Putian—should this person then immigrate to (or sojourn in) Southeast Asia, they might very well participate in various Xinghua huiguan activities, activities of their extended lineage, attend branch temples dedicated to the gods of Putian, as well as take part in activities of the Three in One temples. They could also be involved in supporting Buddhist monks and monasteries in Southeast Asia and through them, back in Fujian. And they could be part of a network of collectively trained spirit mediums such as that found in the branch temples of the Jiulidong of Shiting, Putian.

The Xinghua people immigrated rather late to Southeast Asia, beginning at the end of the 19th century. We can distinguish three or four generations for analysis—early sojourners who worked pulling rickshaws and repairing bicycles, and later got involved in selling and repairing automobiles and running public buses. A postwar generation who built upon their control of the transportation industry to rise to wealth and prominence with the phenomenal expansion of the transportation system. A third generation growing up in the postwar period who had less contact with Putian due to political conditions during the Cultural Revolution, and who often lost their command of Puxian dialect. Conditions for these generations changed in the 1980s when it became possible to return to Putian once again. This led to a major re-investment in local temples and ritual events in Putian in the

early 1980s, led by the remaining first generation survivors and second generation leaders. In the 1990's a return flow of ritual specialists and cultural performers was invited to Southeast Asia by these community leaders. At this time, a group of the Southeast Asian Overseas Chinese leaders, who had been trained as children to be spirit mediums or altar assistants to spirit mediums, began to return to Putian not only to subsidize, but also to participate in the collective training of local spirit mediums in the newly rebuilt temples. This was necessary because of the fact that so many young boys trained as spirit mediums left their villages for the factories of Xiamen or Fuzhou as soon as they reached maturity. Thus it became necessary to speed up the cycle of training, which had formerly taken place once in a generation. In recent years, the collective training of spirit mediums in Putian (*guanjie*) has taken place every four or five years. While this was partly to make up for the loss of these trainings since 1949—since three sessions of over a week each are required before the boys can become temporarily earth-bound immortals—the entire transnational network soon discovered that the forces of modernization were even more powerful at pulling the teams of spirit mediums apart. The only solution was to hold even more training sessions, every few years. Such an intensification of the cycles of training in ritual methods has had a powerful effect on the transnational network as a whole. Another consequence has been the rapid spread of knowledge and pride in these traditions amongst the young people of the villages of the Jiuliyang irrigation system in the northeast Putian plain.

Kuah (2000) focused on the role of Singapore Chinese lineage members of villages in Penglai county in Anxi, Fujian in rebuilding ancestral halls in this region. She noted that main lineage rites of the Ke lineage she studied were inscribed within the larger local procession in honor of Qingshui zushi, a procession I had described in its highly conflicted early revival in the mid-1980s (Dean 1993). She suggested that the very notion of lineage has to be expanded into a broader cultural network. Her account brings out the mutual roles of the local and overseas members of the network, but her overall focus is on the flow of people and funds from Singapore to Anxi. What is significant about the current intensification of the flows within the Xinghua network is the degree of two-way exchange, especially in the ritual realm.

Theoretical approaches to transnational networks

A recent overview of research on transnational networks (Barnes and Reilly 2007) introduces “specific combinations of nodes, flows and linkages, which can also be conceived in terms of structures, processes and/or spaces”. Cultural approaches to understanding transnational spaces tend to talk about them in terms of “imaginaries”. For some transnationalism is a cultural realm in which global capital has created practices and meanings and identities that are no longer bound to a specific geographic place. However, these types of spatial approaches have been critiqued for ignoring the material realities that tether these spaces to the ground. Some “insist that transnational spaces are social spaces that rest on infrastructure including communications networks linked to nodes grounded in localities. Therefore, transnational networks are not detached from the material realities of local spaces, but rather interact with and transform these realities by re-combining the local, national and global in new ways.” Barnes and Reilly (2007) point out that Lefebvre (1991) and Soja (1989) distinguish between “*spatial practice* (the material organization of space), *representation of space* (how space is conceptualized, socially constructed and politically contested) and *spaces of representation* (the intersubjective relationship between human agency, and real and conceptual social spaces).”

By adding network concepts to this model, Barnes and Reilly (2007) suggest one can “examine the *processes* that create network boundaries within transnational spaces. For example, one can describe all of the elements of the network (the network’s spatial practice); examine how the processes occurring within the network and between it and the outside world result in particular representations of that network space; and finally, situate the network as a particular type of space for representing one’s ideas. They suggest that a combined network/spatial approach also helps understand whether (and for whom) transnational networks are “translocal”, “transnational”, and/or “extra-territorial” phenomenon. “A combined network/spatial approach allows researchers to consider what participants within a particular network see as significant in the types of boundaries or borders that they are crossing.”

The re-invention of tradition is highly advanced in coastal Southeast China, and the funding and fervor and ritual knowledge of the Overseas Chinese spirit mediums has played a key role in this process. Several works in Chinese and Southeast Asian studies have recently

explored various theoretical approaches to transnational networks and to translocal spaces (Ong and Nonini 1997, Oakes and Schein 2006, Wang 2005, Feuchtwang 2004). While Ong and Nonini outline certain features of transnational networks of Huaqiao capitalists, Oakes and Schein are interested in migration and networks within China, especially all such translocal networks that exceed the boundaries of the natural village. They define the translocal broadly as “being identified with more than one place at a time” (Oakes and Schein 2006: 1–35). They further argue that the translocal creates new identities, subjectivities, and networks that link places together. These new mobilities and multiple localities, often involving leaps across scale, include translocal imaginaries, including the imagined community of the nation state. Feuchtwang (2004) in contrast argues that there are still many specific processes of place-making underway across China, particularly in the area of local territorial cult celebrations, despite the deterritorializing effects of capitalism (and earlier of Maoist nationalism).

These commentators all note the effects of the massive migration of floating population of workers from the villages to the cities. Some villages in Putian can appear to be empty shells at certain times, with only the elderly and young children left to watch over newly built multi-story homes. Nonetheless, these villages become animated and crowded on the feast days of the gods, as factory workers and successful businessmen return from their far-flung networks all over China.¹ Clearly translocal flows are affected by uneven development all across the different regions of China. Oakes and Schein (2006) also emphasize embodiment in relation to the creation of space/place/networked space. Domestic spaces, the preparation and consumption of food, memory and nostalgia, are all experiences deeply rooted in the body (of the Overseas Chinese abroad and returning home, as well as in the village women thinking of her children in Southeast Asia while preparing holiday ritual meals).

Levitt (2001) provides one way to think about the embodied nature of participating in a transnational network through her notion of the “transnational village”, which I have borrowed for the title of this chapter. Levitt has defined various aspects of the “transnational

¹ These include major enclaves such as “Little Putian” outside of Beijing. In general, Putian businessmen have concentrated on the transportation industry and electronics in their business networks around China.

village", which have considerable relevance for rethinking villages in coastal Southeast and South China. These include: 1) actual migration is not required to be a member; 2) the transnational villages emerge and endure partially because of *social* remittances (which include the ideas, behavior, and social capital that flow from receiving to sending communities); 3) the transnational villages create and are created by organizations that themselves come to act across borders (which include political, religious, and social movement organizations); 4) the development of individuals within transnational villages is diverse. (Levitt 2001: 11–12). Levitt describes and analyzes details of transnational villagers' daily life: She points out that members of transnational communities "develop several fluid, sometimes conflicting identities" (202): "How individuals distribute their loyalty and energy between sending and receiving countries depends upon how political, religious, and social life is organized across space" (Levitt 2001: 203). She also discusses a variety of transnational community forms (203). Levitt's emphasis throughout is on concepts of community and social field rather than on individual activities of transnational entrepreneurs, as tends to be the case in the studies published by Ong and Nonini (1997). In her more recent work, *God Has No Passport* (2007), Levitt emphasizes the ability of religion to move beyond national borders in creating the spaces of the transnational village. By extending the analysis away from charismatic network founders and networkers, or from a quantitative analysis of the monetary remittances or investments flowing back to the village, but instead looking at the entire village community affected by these agents, we can expand our understanding of the spaces created by these networks, whether these be spaces of melancholy memory, longing, imaginary identifications, actual communication of local cultural knowledge or of innovations in the ritual order (which can flow back and forth as well).

Ong (1997) has discussed Overseas Chinese capitalist merchants as "flexible citizens" of an "ungrounded empire", harbingers of an alternative modernity. Others such as Tu Weiming (1991) have suggested that Confucian Overseas Chinese are cultural nationalists who will restore the true origins of Chinese culture from its periphery. However, as Pheng (2006) has pointed out, these images of the Overseas Chinese as Confucians or capitalists or both are contaminated categories generated in part by their intermediary position within colonial regimes, where their merchant status as circulators of capital provided status which could only be figured as embodying Confucian

values.² The bizarre hybrid of the Confucian capitalist is in fact a mix of neo-liberalist instrumentalism and neo-neo-Confucianism authoritarianism. While Overseas Chinese businessmen and their commercial networks have attracted a good deal of attention, the spirit-mediums of the Xinghua Shiting Jiulidong 興化石庭九鯉洞 (Nine Carp Cavern-temple) network of Huang 黃 super-lineage emigrants to Southeast Asia represent a different form of transnational cosmopolitanism (van der Veer 2001).

The Overseas Chinese Xinghua business leaders have deep cultural ties to localized ritual traditions originating in the local subcultures of Southeast China. Rather than arguing that these interests represent a restoration of an essentialistic core of Chinese Confucian values arising at the periphery of "Greater China" (Tu 1991), one could instead point to the fact that certain of these networks are characterized by quite specific ritual traditions rooted in localized practices which were never standardized or considered orthodox in China (see Watson 1985).³ Moreover, these ritual traditions have evolved in separate and distinct cultural contexts and are now once again involved in processes of mutual elaboration, interaction and transformation.

As mentioned in the Historical Overview above, conditions in the Putian area in the late 19th century and early 20th century deteriorated rapidly. The growth in population, and the decline of the irrigation system led to the formation of feuding multi-village alliances. Efforts on the part of local gentry such as Jiang Chunlin 江春霖 to mediate these disputes and to call for a ceasefire, held in the Dongyueguan (Temple of the Eastern Peak) in Jiangkou, were only partially successful. Conditions worsened in the Republican period, when armies moved through the region, sometimes burning villages in their wake. All these factors led to considerable emigration to Southeast Asia, primarily to Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia.

A Xinghua Huiguan 興化會館 was established in Singapore in 1920. In 1921, some 1,651 Xinghua emigrants were located in Singapore, but by 1931 their numbers had increased to over 30,000. A number of branch temples from the Xinghua region were established in Southeast Asia in the first half the 20th century, some by spirit

² Chun (2001) examines the limits of the concept of diaspora in the Southeast Asian context and raises critical perspectives on emerging claims to an alternative modernity within neo-Confucian (and neo-liberal) Overseas Chinese business networks.

³ See the essays responding to Watson in Sutton, ed., *Modern China* Vol. 33.1 (2007)).

mediums who carried a statue of the god and incense from their home temple with them on their travels. Some of these temples flourished, and branched off again into temples scattered around Southeast Asia. The earliest of these temples were Tianhou temples linked to Xinghua Huiguan Native Place Associations. The Xinghua community tended to concentrate on the transportation sector, moving from bicycles to cars to public buses to spare parts to large automobile dealerships to, in recent years, control over many of the palm oil plantations and ethanol producing factories in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Transnational Lineages

A small number of lineage halls (usually shrines within larger temples) were founded in Southeast Asia by Xinghua emigrants from the villages of Jiuliyang irrigated plain of northeast Putian county.⁴ Amongst these emigrants were members of the Huang lineage of Shiting. As mentioned above, there are 10,000 Huang living in the fourteen villages of the greater Shiting area. But there are over 20,000 Huang claiming direct links to this lineage living in Southeast Asia. The examination of certain branch lineage genealogies reveals that this lineage was a trans-national contractual super-lineage (Zheng 2003) which allowed non-related members to purchase membership. Families within this lineage adopted in unrelated boys who were then sent to Southeast Asia to sink or swim. The lineage pursued multiple strategies of survival and expansion simultaneously.

The Huang lineage in Shiting and in Southeast Asia is an example of a transnational lineage (village). In the back hall of the Tongtian-gong 通天宮 in Seremban, Malaysia, which has a side hall named the Jiulidong, one finds a shrine dedicated to the ancestors of the Huang lineage. The Huang lineage in Shiting has recently printed (1990) a grand lineage genealogy, which includes the biographies of many recent prominent businessmen and politicians, including prominent Overseas Chinese business leaders. Such sources do little to address

⁴ In Indonesia Daoism is not recognized as an official religion, which has led the majority of the Chinese populations of those states to define themselves as Buddhist. This presents many problems for the temples of local ritual traditions such as the Jiulidong network described in this paper. Many of these temples place a Buddha in their front hall.

the question of the early history of overseas immigration. A recent hand-written genealogy of one branch of the Huang lineage provides far more specific information on the concrete processes of emigration within one branch of the lineage. This document lists names of ancestors who moved to Southeast Asia, adopted sons sent overseas, and those successful lineage members who prospered overseas, and returned home to Shiting. Many of the latter went back and forth, bringing more relations with them, and generating an active flow within the network. This genealogy provides a basis for multi-sited ethnography on the extended lineage in Shiting and Southeast Asia.

Ancestral worship is conducted in the shrine to the Huang ancestors in the back hall of the Dongtiangong.⁵ Similar rites are performed at the Wang ancestral shrine at the back of the Zhaohuimiao in Singapore. However, the Xinghua community, being late-comers to Southeast Asia in comparison to Hokkien, Hakka, Guangdong, and Hainan communities, have not yet developed Common Surname Associations to link the far-flung descendants of a shared surname together. Other modes of tying the Xinghua community together have developed instead, including the spread of *guanjie* training in collective spirit mediumistic practices. Indeed, even the Tongtiangong temple, which primarily serves the extended Huang lineage community, maintains two side halls for spirit medium temples from the Jiangkou area, the Mingandian and the Jiulidong. The central hall of the temple is devoted to local gods worshipped in the Shiting region. In many respects, the cults of the gods and the spirit medium ritual tradition are the main vehicles for the expression of lineage identity.

The Nine Carp Cavern Temple Network

The mediums who founded the worship of the Four Immortals Lu Shiyuan 士元盧仙長, Wang Chengguang 成光王仙師, Chen Shande 善德陳仙師, and XieYuanhui 元暉謝仙師 were at first active in a structure built in the late 1920's or early 1930's adjoining a temple in Shiting. During the Japanese invasion, the gods of this temple were moved inland and kept safe in an ancestral hall. Some of the god statues also appear to have been carried to Singapore around this time, where they

⁵ Further research is needed to determine the scope of these rites.

became the basis for the first Jiulidong (Nine Carp Cavern-temple) in Southeast Asia, established in 1938. In 1946 a branch temple was established in Tiping Tingyi, Sumatra, in 1955 in Kisiran, Sumatra, and in 1963 a branch temple was established in Jakarta as well.⁶ Other related temples include the Dongyueguan founded in 1965 in Medan, Sumatra which includes altars to the gods of the different sects of the *Tanban* ritual tradition, along with many other gods (sixty-seven in all). In a parallel but independent process, a Jiulidong temple was erected as a subsection of the Dongtiangong in Seramban, Malaysia in 1951. Other temples linked loosely to the network can be found in Ipoh in Malaysia, and in Brunei as well. All of these temples were cut off from developments in Putian from the 1950's onwards. Moreover, each of the four main Jiulidong temples (Singapore, Tiping Tinyi, Kisiran and Jakarta) declares itself to be a *fenzhen* 分鎮 (a network of independent temples, rather than a hierarchical grouping of temples). All of them acknowledge the Jiulidong in Shiting to be their founding temple. This temple has been rebuilt or significantly expanded three times since 1980. In the 1990's, spirit medium temple leaders from this network divined the location of Immortal Lu Shiyuan's original temple in Pinghai township in the mountains above the Meizhou Island ferry pier, and built a new temple there.

A number of ritual innovations have occurred in these Southeast Asian temples over the course of their independent evolutions, each in a unique political and multi-ethnic environment. These innovations include the development, starting in Sumatra in the 1970's, of a new set of ritual initiations in the cult of the Goddess Ou Xiangu 歐仙姑 and in techniques of spirit writing and ritual dance for women's groups. These women participate in the collective dances of the spirit mediums and the *tanban* altar association held at the conclusion of *guanjie* initiations in the courtyard outside the temple. The women weave in and out and crisscross counter-clockwise through the male *tanban* dancers while following their own banners inscribed with the name of the Goddess Ou Xiangu and her spirit-writing implements.

⁶ (Salmon and Lombard 1980 (2nd ed.), 208–213). The Fu Pu Xian Zongyici 福莆仙總義祠 (Fuqing, Putian, and Xianyou collective ancestral temple) had been built in Jakarta in 1950, around the grounds of a Buddhist monastery called the Yuliantang, founded in 1927, which in 1951 changed its name to the Guanghuasi 廣化寺, at the instigation of the abbot, Buddhist Monk Benqing 本清, who had been ordained at the Guanghuasi in Putian (Salmon and Lombard 1980 (2nd ed.), 191–197).

Similar spirit writing training sessions for women spread to Jakarta in the 1990's and some sessions were held recently in Singapore as well. The first female spirit medium training session ever held in Putian, Fujian was organized in the summer of 2007 at the Jiulidong (Nine Carp Cavern Temple) in Shiting, Putian by female adherents of Goddess Ou Xiangu from the branch Jiulidong temple in Tebing Tinggi in Sumatra.

Documents photographed at the Jakarta Jiulidong Temple concerning the female initiates of the Ou Xiangu cult provide concrete evidence of ritual innovation within the extended Nine Carp Cavern Temple network.⁷ The cult of Ou Xiangu began in the Tebing Tingyi Jiulidong temple in the late 1960s as a spirit-writing cult for women, channeling the goddess. Eventually the women there, and later those in the Jakarta temple, developed a series of training sessions and initiation rituals with documents and certificates parallel to those of the men in the *tanban* spirit medium altar associations. However, given the relative scarcity of Daoist ritual masters in Jakarta, Buddhist monks were called in to perform the *Yuxiu* Preparatory Cultivation rituals, which are a sort of preliminary funeral, in which the debts incurred at birth to the underworld Treasury, as astrologically determined, are erased by the burning of the appropriate quantities of spirit money. Certificates are issued by the Buddhist monks for participation in the Yogic rites of the Three Mysteries, and the Fast of the Medicine King.

Note that Ou Xiangu is said to be a disciple of Xu Zhenren 徐真人 in these documents, linking her with other goddesses such as Chen Jinggu 陳靖姑, a prominent deity of the Lushan ritual tradition. In general, the Daoist ritual traditions of the Putian plains can be categorized as Zhengyi traditions, but there is clearly a blurring of boundaries in this region of northern Putian, where the legends and ritual traditions associated with Chen Jinggu are still very powerful. One story recounted in this area is that the *tanban* spirit medium associations

⁷ Jakarta Jiulidong, Java, Indonesia, July 2007. These documents include a set of Ou Xiangu 歐仙姑 ordination certificates, including 1) *Lushan dafayuan* 廬山大法院門下護身牒; 2) *Qiongyao dafayuan* 瓊瑤大法院一為預修先墳才庫牒; 3) *Yujia sanmiyuanyuan* certificates 瑞伽三密院一為預修禮忏齋坛牒; 4) 建預修藥師勝會齋壇牒; 5) *Lushan dafayuan yuxiu jikudie* 廬山大法院預修寄庫牒 and; 6) *pingju* 憑據文 documents. Other documents from this temple include a 1999 stele on the history and contributions to the temple and additional materials on the organization of the temple and the altar to spirit mediums of the past. Female members of the cult of Ou Xiangu are included on a separate section of this altar.

were originally a group of 360 altars established in the Tang dynasty by Chen Shouyuan 陳守元, the Daoist ritual master of the Min Kingdom, who is said in some accounts to have been the spouse of the goddess Chen Jinggu, a prominent goddess of the Lushan Daoist ritual tradition. Still, Putian documents carefully avoid the usual graph for Lushan, and local Daoist ordination certificates stress the connection with the Celestial Masters on Longhushan 龍虎山 in Jiangxi (Dean 1993).

The Overseas Chinese temple leaders who returned to Shiting in the early 1980's were wealthy businessmen who had been trained as spirit mediums in their own temples in Southeast Asia. They helped sponsor the rebuilding of temples and the training of a new generation of spirit mediums. They brought back training manuals and ritual paraphernalia. They soon discovered that the pace of economic hyper-development had unusual consequences for their efforts to revive the tradition of the *tanban* spirit medium altar associations. As soon as the young boys reached adult age they would head off to cities in Fujian, or around China, or later to Southeast Asia or to North and South American and Europe. It became necessary to hold training sessions (normally arranged in a sequence of three *guanjie* rituals plus one *yuxiu* (preparatory cultivation for immortality) rite) every five or six years. Thus in some temples, multiple trainings have been held over the past twenty-five years. This has meant a greater role for the Overseas Chinese temple leaders, be they businessmen, spirit mediums, or both. Many of them now make repeated visits to Putian every year to sponsor and preside over and sometimes to participate in training sessions. More and more local people from Putian pay return visits to the temples in Southeast Asia. The network has become extremely active. These Overseas Chinese spirit mediums/businessmen have successfully re-established transnational ritual ties between communities that were cut off for over a generation. Now these global citizens/spirit mediums are once again playing an important role in the re-invention of local cultural and religious traditions in Southeast China. All of this entails quite substantial funding of the ritual economy.

By ritual economy, we mean more than flow of funds for temple construction and rituals from Southeast Asia, or the income and expenses of the temples and ritual events within the network (Yang 2000).⁸ The

⁸ Yang discusses these practices as instances of ritual excess (Bataille), but does not link them adequately to material practices. For suggestive approaches, see the recent research on ritual economies in Mesoamerican studies (Wells 2006).

production of value through participation in ritual work, whether through the sponsoring of temple building or repairs, or through the active participation in and co-sponsoring of spirit medium training sessions, forms a central element of ritual economy. Flows of capital are only part of the equation, as the flows of affect and symbolic capital back and forth within the mutually resonating network open up new avenues for the production of value. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of the funding of ritual events inside China is now local. This is not to deny that key contributions of capital and ritual knowledge by Overseas Chinese played a decisive role in the recent evolution of this trans-national network.

What demands attention is the ability of ritual events within these networks to absorb flows of capital or ethnic nationalism without losing the power to generate meaningful worlds for participants (Dean and Lamarre 2005; 2008). This issue can be examined in terms of the effects of an expanding ritual market (see Stark and Finke 2000 for a thesis on the strengthening of belief generated in an increasingly diversified ritual marketplace) both in China and in many parts of Southeast Asia. Further research will need to examine class stratification and the reassertion of social and gender hierarchy within these rituals, while also exploring innovations in social roles and transformative moments within ritual events (including spirit-possession and the setting in motion of cosmological forces).

The ritual traditions of collective training of spirit mediums have become crucial to the maintenance of the far-flung Huang lineage in Southeast Asia. While many different dialect groups of China have common surname associations in Southeast Asia, few such groups can match the intensity and ritual complexity of the *Tanban Guanjie* performances of the Huang emigrants from Putian. In recent years, many other Xinghua temples have imitated the success of this highly effective mode of generating bonds within an immigrant community, even if they did not have such traditions in their home villages in Putian. The combination of local god cults, lineage ties and spirit medium ritual traditions generates a more active, involved, performative and energetic network. On the one hand, leadership within Overseas Chinese communities is closely tied to wealth and personal connections. The ability of these businessmen to send remittances back to their home villages has in a few cases led to their becoming the puppet masters of local village life, breeding a culture of dependency. On the other hand, spirit mediumism appears to partially flatten network hierarchies, and open up leadership to horizontal, more open processes. Moreover, local

ritual centers still have privileged access to cosmological powers, which can be claimed through ritual performances, and affect the flow of authority within the network.

Members of the Xinghua Southeast Asian networks have returned often to multiple points in Putian, including the Jiulidong in Shiting, as well as to major local sites of the *Tanban* traditions such as the Mingandian and the Zhiyuantang (see below). Currently, some of the leaders of different Nine Carp Cavern Temple in Indonesia are threatening to overpower the prerogatives of the leadership of the Huang lineage within Shiting village itself, as competing factions of very wealthy Overseas Chinese businessmen, who were all trained as spirit mediums in their youth, struggle to determine the shape of the home temples of the cult (the Jiulidong has been rebuilt three times in the past two decades) and of the village (vigorous debates over plans to rebuild the Shitinggong Temple are ongoing).

Three in One networks interlaced with Tanban Spirit Medium networks

The Three in One religious movement founded by Lin Zhao-en (1517–1598) in the late Ming began as a translocal ritual system with universalist tendencies, and expanded at the end of the 19th century into a transnational network (Dean 1998). By the late Qing, several hundred temples had been founded across Putian and Xianyou. These numbers doubled to over 1000 temples during the Republican period. Currently, Three in One leaders claim that over 500,000 people in the Xinghua area are Three in One initiates. This is out of a total population of three million, or one out of every six people. The Three in One temples can be found in one out of three villages in Putian. They usually represent an additional, voluntary level of ritual participation and self-cultivation (moral as well as inner alchemical), for those individuals and families who sought initiation into the movement. Only very rarely did they become village temples, in which all members of the village community participate. Most Three in One temples would periodically make a pilgrimage (*jinxiang*) to the founding temple, the Zongkongtang, on Dongshan hill in the north sector of Putian city, on the date of Lin Zhao-en's birth (1/16) or to his tomb in Huating township on the anniversary of his death (7/16). Most temples also participated in local groupings of temples, with ritualized return visits

of *Daoyou* (friends of the Way) to special ritual occasions organized by respective temples (complete with invitation cards). The Three in One temples are translocal in that they are spread evenly but converge on certain central points, and because they group regionally (and by sectarian affiliation) beyond the village or ritual alliance level.

The early Xinghua emigrants to Southeast Asia also carried the Three in One to Singapore and Malaysia. Major temples can be found in Penang, Klang, Seremban, Johor, and Singapore (Dean, 1998). Statues of Lin Zhao'en and his Daoist sidekick Zhuo Wanchun appear in larger composite temples in Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore as well (Dongyueguan in Medan, Jiulidong in Singapore, Jakarta, Kisiran, and Tebing tingyi. The newly consecrated (in August, 2008) Sanyitang in Seremban, Malaysia is a massive temple costing hundreds of thousands of dollars. The craftsmen involved in the construction were almost all from Putian. A Buddhist icon factory manager in Jiangkou imported wood from Thailand and had it carved into large Buddhas in Shiting for subsequent delivery to Malaysia (in pieces, within containers). Several teams of Three in One ritual specialists from Putian were invited to the consecration.

The Seremban Sanyitang 三一堂 has a long history and dedicated initiates. Interestingly, many of these are also collectively trained spirit mediums. We met the son of the temple director of the Sanyitang in Seremban, and he told us that he was frequently possessed by none other than the Sanyi jiaozhu, Master Xiawuni, Lin Longjiang (Lin Zhao-en) himself. The Sanyitang in Seremban has merged the practise of collective spirit medium initiations with the self-cultivation and ritual practices of the Three in One. As we will see, this kind of mix already occurred in the Shiting region of Putian. However, possession by Lin Longjiang is quite unusual in the Putian plains. The combination of spirit medium traditions with Three in One ritual traditions in the more open and experimental space of Malaysia seems to have encouraged an entirely different embodiment of the teachings of the Master.

A stele carved in 2006 at the Zhiyuantang 志元堂 temple in Houwu village (Shidong) within the Shiting mega-village shows the role in the history of the temple of the Three in One initiates and their spread of their networks into Southeast Asia (and the return flow back to Putian from within this network). The inscription also reveals the intricate links between the Three in One and spirit medium Altar Associates possessed by other popular deities worshipped in this temple, and thus

provide a prehistory to the practices of possession by Lin Longjiang in Malaysia. The stele is entitled “A Glorious Past”, and is inscribed on a (10 x 2 meter slab of black marble, mounted on the hall in a side altar at the Zhiyuantang in Shiting, Putian. See the text and translation in *Appendix Two*).

Several themes in this inscription deserve comment. First, the mixed level of language is fascinating in such a traditional genre of writing/inscription. Popular colloquialisms mix and jar with generic poetic expressions, creating a unique voice. Secondly, the interaction between the Three in One initiates and the *Tanban* Altar Association is very close and complex. Although the temple is primarily run by the Three in One initiates, several local popular gods are worshipped in the temple, and these gods possess mediums. At some point, collective spirit medium training sessions were established, and eventually the leader of the *Tanban* Altar Association that developed from these training sessions appears to have taken control over the temple. Both groups appear to have co-existed throughout the history of the temple. Return visits from Three in One initiates based at a branch temple in Kuala Lumpur are crucial for the continued development of the temple. In more recent years, other groups of ritual specialists have also been invited into the temple to conduct rites and perform ritual opera.

The first question again is how this mixture of spirit medium traditions and the Three in One affects the nature of the network in South-east Asia, and how that impacts in turn on the transnational space of Shiting, Putian. Once again, the spirit medium traditions add intensity and excitement to an already deeply committed community of Three in One practitioners. Not all Three in One traditions have transformed in this way in Malaysia, so we may be witnessing new forms of ritual innovation, perhaps a product of competition and imitation of other, Hokkien dialect spirit medium activities such as the cult of the Nine Emperors. Further research is needed to sort out these influences and to access the potential long term impact of this particular mix on the transnational imaginary of Putian.

Additional networks

While this chapter has focused on the extended Huang lineage, the temple network of the Shiting Jiulidong and their spirit mediums, and

the network of Three in One temples, there are several other networks that can be traced from various points in Putian to Southeast Asia. These include 1) the networks Xinghua Huiguan 興化會館 that has spread across Southeast Asia, often linked, as in the case of the Singapore Xinghua Huiguan, with temples dedicated to Tianhou 天后, and frequently linked with offices of the transportation guild dominated by Xinghua emigrants; 2) the network of the Jiangkou Dongyueguan 江口東嶽觀, which has important branch temples in Medan, Sumatra, Kuching, Malaysia, and in other locations in Indonesia; 3) Buddhist networks of several important monasteries including the Guanghuasi 廣化寺 in Putian that sent off monks to establish branch monasteries in Southeast Asia. In 1958, the last wave of these monks was dispatched. Some of these monks were amongst the first representatives of the Overseas Chinese to return to China in 1979 to offer to assist in the rebuilding of the great Buddhist monasteries of Putian. For example, Buddhist Monk Yuanchan returned with 1.5 million yuan to assist in the rebuilding of the Guanghuasi 廣化寺 in 1979; 4) multiple smaller networks of particular lineages or village temples with one or two temples in Southeast Asia. One example is the Wang surname of Houguan village which built the Zhaohuimiao 昭惠廟 in Singapore in 1955 (the god's statue had already arrived in 1895), and rebuilt the temple in 1996 with an ancestral shrine in the back room—a lengthy stele dated 1996 outlines this history; 5) Christian networks linking the Xinghua community in Sarawak to the Methodist church in Putian founded by the missionary William Brewster. No doubt other networks could be added to this complex, intertwined and overlapping network. The network of businesses linked to the transportation sector in Singapore and southern Malaysia, which was dominated by Xinghua emigrants, would be another series of interconnected nodes to explore.

The networks linking Putian to Southeast Asia have multiple, tangled strands. Some networks have developed empty shell temples in Singapore to serve as meeting places for the members of the network when they gather periodically in that city. Some networks work hierarchically by generation of founding temple to secondary branch temple to tertiary temple, etc. Others consist of independent nodes, like the Jiulidong network, which nonetheless communicate between one another and transmit ritual innovations through the network. Individuals usually are members of multiple networks (commercial associations, native place hooligan, village temple network, lineage network, spirit medium *tanban* altar association member, worshipper

in Tianhou temples, etc.). Other cultural institutions such as theater troupes and marionette troupes help maintain and interconnect these networks. A single Daoist master from Putian now works in Singapore, and he is often invited to Xinghua temples throughout Malaysia. Three in One ritualists from the Zhurongtang in Johor visit the network of Three in One temples around Malaysia and Singapore, helping to link sectors of the Xinghua community together. So too does the flow of ritual specialists, marionettists, and performers from Putian who travel now quite regularly around the Xinghua communities of Southeast Asia.

The study of such intricate, overlapping networks is one way to prevent local history from falling into the trap of endless recuperation by national history. In that model, local history can be nothing more than an endless series of minor variations on a theme, with the underlying issue being the process of cultural unification of the locale with the state. A focus on trans-national, even global networks works against the prevalent model of hierarchical encompassment and top-down gentrification of local society by introducing multiple planes of reference, alternative and transversal sources of cultural invention and investment, and the possibility of a local cultural self-definition drawing creatively from multiple sources.

This research has implications for the study of the past as well as for an understanding of future trends in East and Southeast Asia. Research into the temple networks linking the many different sub-ethnic communities (Hokkien, Hakka, Cantonese, Hainanese, Xinghua, Yunnanese, etc.) around Southeast Asia with the temples and lineage halls in their ancestral villages within different local cultural regions of China will provide a long-term perspective on an essential but still little studied aspect of the historical development of what Lombard (2007) called “Another ‘Mediterranean’ in Southeast Asia”. This kind of research will help explicate strategies of self-differentiation, conflict and conflict resolution internal to the histories of coastal Chinese communities of Southeast Asia. The links between these institutions and other, better studied institutions (trade networks, business families, tax farmers, remittance agents, etc.) will shed light on Chinese cultural practices and modes of participation in emerging or alternate regimes of global or regional capitalism.

Study of the renewal of these networks and the role of localized ritual traditions in these processes will reveal essential aspects of the process

of globalization and its impact on specific locales. This research will raise important questions about the ability of local cultures to negotiate the forces of capitalism, ethnic identity and cultural nationalism sweeping through Asia today. Unexpectedly, these local ritual traditions show extraordinary versatility and flexibility in creatively engaging with these forces without losing relevance to their participants. This in turn raises broader questions about the impact of modernity on contemporary Asia and the value of theories of alternative modernity for the study of these developments. While some theorists have looked to Overseas Chinese business leaders as the standard bearers of alternative modernity, this chapter examines local ritual traditions linking Southeast China to Southeast Asia and the experiences of participants in collective rites of spirit medium initiation to trace another possible response to the forces of capitalism in East Asia.

Study of the cycling of tradition within transnational ritual networks leads to new understandings of the resources for fluctuating identity formation with multiple layers and thresholds of identity. One can point to three successive systemic changes within the network as a whole (i.e., the mid-Ming rise of the regional ritual alliances, the late Qing rise of *tanban* spirit medium association networks, and the early and late 20th century growth of trans-national networks of the Huang lineage based Jiulidong (Nine Carp Cavern-temple)), in which the participating individuals and groups can be understood as transforming nodes, rather than as fixed entities. Furthermore, in each of these instances, non-human “actants”, to use a term of Bruno Latour’s (2005), were a part of the broader “actor-network”. These include the water within the irrigation systems of Putian, the deities invented and invoked within this tradition, and the circuits of capital and flows of industry underlying the success of the Xinghua community in Southeast Asia. Taking these *actants* seriously allows us to conceive of system-wide changes to the networks which effect human and non-human participants alike. Concrete examination of the construction of these networks allows one to build up an understanding of a certain kind of social assemblage, without requiring the invocation of “the social” in the Durkheimian sense. Study of ritual experience also shows how the figure of the organic individual so central to theories of nationalism and certain varieties of sociological network theory can be questioned by focusing on the micro-sociological level of experience within ritual events—there, minor acts of the smallest opposition, the slightest

imitations, and the merest adaptations can lead to the emergence of new realms of experience, changes to ritual traditions, and the development of new arenas for the generation of multiple, partial or pathic identities.

Anderson (1983; 1991) described archaic empires as centers of magical attraction which unlike modern nation-states did not attempt to totalize and individualize simultaneously, but instead assumed porous borders and mutable subjects. Perhaps one can imagine a new polity that would revert to these models, rather than insisting on organic links between independent subject/bodies, ethnicities, languages, and nation-states. Perhaps this is one longer term potential effect of the spread of multi-national corporate capitalism—the gradual diminishing of the prominence of nationalism and the emergence of new modes of imagined, or performative ritual community within widespread trans-national networks.

In some ways the networks described above are resolutely local, while building on and transforming within trans-national flows. Thus in another sense they are neither exclusively local nor entirely global and thus somehow temporarily evade re-assimilation into projects of nationalism or cultural essentialism.

Earthbound China or fluid coastal communities?

Fei Xiaotong famously entitled one of his books *Earthbound China* (Fei 1949). For coastal Southeast and South China, however, an alternative history of a far more culturally mixed set of cultures with fluid boundaries has been developed. Both Clark (1991; 2007) and So (2000) have argued for the openness of coastal Quanzhou to trans-national flows of people, ideas, technologies, crops, and capital. They have argued for the impact of these networks on rural communities gathered into hinterlands for coastal trading centers in the Southern Song, if not before. Rawski (1972) documented the impact of Asian and global trading networks on the everyday life of villagers in Fujian in the Ming, and Ng (1983) has shown the continuation of coastal trading even after the official prohibitions in the late Ming. Taiwanese historians have shown the interconnections between lineages, cults, communities, and associations of many kinds on both sides of the Taiwan Straits throughout the Qing dynasty, and historians of Southeast

Asia have documented the spread across the entire region of Hokkien communities from the Ming onwards. Detailed studies of *qiaoxiang* (Overseas Chinese [transnational] villages) were conducted by Chen Ta in the 1930s (Chen 1943). More recently, Fujian has been at the center of research on newly revitalizing networks of Overseas Chinese emigration, return visiting, and cultural interaction that develop new, expanded, transnational social spaces.

One of the most intriguing of Skinner's (1996) ideas about cultural change and creativity were expressed in his essay on Baba, Peranakan and Mestizo cultures of Southeast Asia. As he explained, these were cultures that had developed independently in a foreign, multi-cultural context. This is one of Skinner's most explicit statements on the possibility of cultural change and continuous self-differentiation. These hybrid cultures did not become more and more like themselves. Instead they continued to transform and adapt to shifting socio-economic, political and cultural surrounding forces. Sahlins (1989) set the stage for this discussion in his essay on the intersection of distinct cosmologically inflected cultures in the Pacific rim, where he noted the collision of three completely different economic/cultural systems (Chinese tributary system, Polynesian potlatch system, and Western capitalist mercantile trading system). His theory of cultural change requires such shocking encounters to play themselves out over time, with deep structural ramifications for all the parties involved. Sahlins (1993) went on to suggest that there was a long early history of globalization that could be studied precisely in those regions where these cultural systems were forced to co-exist over time. These places include the many entrepôts in Southeast Asia, from Rangoon, Bangkok and Phuket to Penang and Melaka, from Singapore to Jakarta to Kuching, and onwards into the eastern archipelagos of Southeast Asia. DeBernardi's work (2004; 2006) builds on these insights to provide a historical account of conflict and accommodation between cultures (Malay, Indian Muslim, Chinese (of many dialect groups), and English) in Penang, tracing the shifting self-understanding of these communities throughout the process of these negotiations, over a 150 year period, and including explicitly the impact of nationalism within colonial and post-colonial polities on notions and strategies of cultural essentialism. Skinner's essay had (1996) suggested that the rise of discourses of nationalism and ethnic identity spelled the end for hybrid cultures of Southeast Asia. But, DeBernardi (2004; 2006) shows that

hybridity continues to play a role at the local level in the interactions between and among ethnic groups in their respective negotiations of modernity.

These insights into the extraordinary creative impact of (transnational) hybrid culture can be extended back to our understandings of the local cultures of Southern and Southeast China. Rather than being faced with a choice between staying put in their village or imagining themselves as one with the imperial order of space (Faure and Siu, 2006), villagers in these transnational villages were simultaneously present in multiple spaces. They were part of an extended, transnational social field that reaches beyond the limits of their marketing system, national borders, and imperial imaginaries. These spaces are created through networks sustained by ties of ritual tradition, religious faith and performance, “lineage” stretched to the breaking point, flexible associational groupings, shared experiences and narratives, and economic investment in community (education, temples, hospitals, infrastructure) as well as in fields and factories. With the example of Skinner’s temporary zones of cultural independence and experimentation in Southeast Asia in mind, one can rethink the cultural resources and expanding realm of local cultural experimentation open to the (trans-)regional cultures of coastal China.

None of these models quite fit with well-known models of the flexible citizenship of Chinese capitalists or of the return of the traditional Confucian periphery—or to visions of orthopraxy and cultural uniformity within China, for that matter. Watson (2007) notes in a recent rejoinder to questions about his theory of Chinese cultural orthopraxy that if he had done his research in the New Territories now it would not have been on village ritual but on strategies of the transnational lineage—not on processes of cultural homogeneity, uniformity and control but on adaptation and change in conditions of global diasporic distribution. Sangren (1984), commenting on the research of Maurice Freedman and Lawrence Crissman on Chinese communities in Southeast Asia, identified the importance of flexible associational strategies of the Overseas Chinese (and by extension, of transnational villagers throughout various transnational networks) in successfully adapting to changing circumstances:

It is more the experience of creating and participating in groups than the acknowledgement of particularistic ties that accounts for the Chinese talent for organizing so adaptively to diverse environments. Groups such as *chi-ssu-kung-yeh* and *shen-ming-hui* in modest rural settings like *Ta-ch’i*

provide a flexible precedent and model for participation in and creation of formal groups in relatively complex urban contexts...a shift in focus from formal features to operational norms is necessary...the pervasiveness of sequential rotation, decision by consensus, and committee hierarchies in Chinese associations,...the flexibility, adaptability...of these groups lies more in these operational norms and in generalized expectations regarding *hui* than in particular combinations of organizational features such as Freedman's classic lineages." (Sangren 1984: 410).

The intrinsic cultural hybridity of the villages of South and South-east China, combined with their translocal tales of "origins" in the central plains, their openness to transnational trade and cultural contact, well-established by the Song, and the highly flexible associational forms developed throughout these networks to respond to continually changing conditions, suggest that we conceive of the villages of this region not primarily in terms of how they identified with the imperial center, but rather how they grew to recognize and work with their own differences from that central model, by developing and fostering transnational social spaces and networks internally and creating a consciously hybrid set of distinct cultures which only appear to be local and regional and earthbound from the imperial perspective, but in fact were always already hybrid, translocal, transnational, and continuously transforming.



[Source: *Google Maps* image, 2007, modified.]

Map 41: The Jiulidong temple network from Putian to Southeast Asia

CHAPTER TEN

CONCLUSIONS: RITUAL AND MODERNITY

This chapter draws on the history and descriptions of ritual events on the Putian plains provided above to develop theoretical implications for the study of ritual in general. The discussion covers topics such as the nature of space and time in these rituals, the multiple liturgical frameworks at play in a single ritual, and the multiple points of view that co-exist within any such complex ritual event. The complexity of the experience of these ritual events calls for a new approach to issues of subjectivity and agency. This chapter therefore introduces a micro-sociological mode of analysis to examine questions such as ritual change and ritual process in terms other than formations of identity. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the relationship of ritual to modernity, and an overview of the implications of the rise of the “ritual power formation” in the Putian plains for the study of local history in China.

Hybrid space, hybrid time

The ritual events of the Putian plain occur in a hybrid space, which mixes administrative territories of past and present dynasties with the locally-created spaces of the ritual alliances. Daoist documents, printed prayer forms, and local participants in ritual events give their addresses in terms that mix spatial layers of the past imperial system and modern administrative terms with the current spaces of the ritual alliances. People are identified on these documents as “Mr. or Madame X, of Fujian Province, Putian county, X (imperial) sub-canton, X ritual alliance, X village, X temple, and X *shê*-altar”. Given this mixed space-time continuum of ritual, it comes as no surprise that the space of the temple can be transformed into a Land of the Way by the installation of a portable Daoist altar. During the Daoist rites (and the same processes apply to Buddhist and Three in One rites) the ritual specialists visualize a transformation of the space of the altar and the temple into a charged cosmic space, stretching in all directions, and filled with the cosmological forces of their respective ritual traditions. For the Daoist

masters these include the astral deities of the Daoist stellar courts, the emblematic animals of the four directions, and the spirit generals and their hosts of spirit soldiers who assist the Daoist ritual master in driving away demonic influences and clearing the way for the cosmic renewal brought about by the recitation of the scriptures of the Way and the inner voyage of the chief ritual master to the Daoist heavens to memorialize on behalf of the community. In one rite of the Daoist ritual tradition, the ritual masters run around eight tables marked with the hexagrams of the Book of Changes formed out of piles of rice. In the center is the Yinyang symbol. The rite is a deconstruction of the organized cosmos in a return to the undifferentiated Dao, and a re-commencement of the cosmos. After invoking the powers of each direction, the ritual masters unmake the hexagrams, ending with the merging of Yin and Yang symbols. At this point, the younger ritual masters leap over the tables while waving flags and banners attracting the gods to the spectacle. The conclusion of the Daoist rites involves the sending off a paper messenger mounted on a paper horse, bearing a written memorial. These figures are “transformed by flames” into the ever-present invisible realm of the gods.

In the processions of the gods, the village space is re-energized and purified by the god’s tour of inspection. The god visits each household to “carry out the Dao”, bringing renewed cosmic powers to bear on the health and prosperity of the household members. Spirit mediums possessed by the gods also inhabit a hybrid space—striding between this world and the world of the gods. This being-outside themselves (exstasis, ecstasy) enables the mediums to undergo feats of endurance of pain—walking barefoot across glowing coals, standing in the shooting flames of a large Roman Candle bare-chested, or striking themselves with maces until blood runs freely down their backs as they are carried in sedan chairs around the village boundaries. The special space of mediumistic trance is traced in the collective dance patterns of the *Tanban* Altar Associates of the northern irrigated plain, who draw out elaborate cosmological patterns as they run after the mediums in trance.

At a larger spatial level, the networks of regional alliance are traced by moving lines of god processions and linked lantern processions. Close examination of the routes followed by these processions and the networks that they form allow us to see how powerfully the ecological environment shapes the parameters of the networks and the vectors of movement that trace it out. Most of the alliances are inscribed within

li sub-cantons that themselves follow the development of the irrigation systems. However, we have also seen that each village and each villager can be part of multiple networks, some linked to ecological factors, others more open to the creation of voluntary associations. Initiates of the Three in One movement, and members of lay Buddhist movements, are linked in local networks but also in overall networks, centering on the Zongkongtang and the tomb of Lin Zhao'en. Many god cults, such as those dedicated to Yuhuang dadi, Tianshang shengmu (Mazu), or Tiangong yuanshuai, have similar cult centers and networks formed by pilgrimages and incense division. The fundamental openness of the gods to worship of any kind means that travelers are welcome in village temples, and new connections are continually being forged. Centers for dream divination are popular places for new encounters with cosmic forces. The spatial system of the gods is profoundly localized and profoundly open at the same time. As mentioned above, the relocation of temples under conditions of "urban renewal" has presented new challenges to communal activity, but in several cases (Nanmen near Putian), the rituals of the *shê* altars of the transformed localities have taken over the new urban spaces fairly successfully.

If we conclude that the ritual event is characterized by a multiplicity of hybrid spatial realms, we can also see similar effects in terms of the temporality of ritual. The annual rites of welcoming the gods back at New Years and celebrating and protecting the community (*yuanxiao*), the *Pudu* (universal deliverance of the hungry ghosts), the autumnal communal rituals of thanksgiving for the harvest, and the send off of the gods at the end of the year provide a continuous cosmological temporal framework. When one adds onto these events annual rituals of commemoration for ancestors (on Qingming 清明 or Dongzhi 冬至), the many birthdays of the local gods, and rituals associated with particular religious movements (such as Three in One, lay Buddhist, or local spirit altars), one reaches a point in which ritual activities are taking place in one's village or in nearby villages two out of every three days. If one adds to this the daily rites of veneration of the ancestors and household gods on family altars, or daily offerings in Three in One temples and Buddhist shrines by initiates, or the random offerings of incense and consultation with the gods through divination that take place on a daily basis in temples across the Putian plains, one reaches a point at which it is difficult to distinguish ritual life from the everyday.

We suggested above that the collective rituals of the village temples be seen as the intensification of the ritual basis of everyday life, rather than as separate sacred, a-temporal time apart. Membership in the *jia* household is also primarily a ritual function (Chun 2000). Each individual is simultaneously part of several overlapping ritual regimes (household, lineage, village temples, voluntary associations, linked cults). But note that everyday life is also the realm of leisure, friendship, and pleasure (Lefebvre), and that these elements also are intensified in the playfulness, rivalries, performative pleasure, humor, tumult and excitement of ritual events.

Ritual temporality is also subject to transformation by the actions of ritual specialists. Daoist ritual masters reverse time in their visualizations in a return to the undifferentiated Dao beyond the origin of time. They also accelerate cycles of time through the recitation of scriptures that claim to be transmitted once every kalpa (cosmic cycle), thereby generating merit for the community. The tempo of ritual performances is such that clock time disappears and ritual actions take on dreamlike qualities as rituals stretch on in some cases for days with only short breaks between rites. Certain rituals work with cosmological methods to exorcize demons through cracks in time. Spirit possession seems to emerge from such cracks in time, as people suddenly fall into trance and just as suddenly come out of it. Utterances by possessed mediums can scramble historical periods through especially intense relations with different eras—one medium we met put the Tang before the Han dynasty, and both times overtook and replaced the present. Ritual action is itself constantly subject to interruption from divination of the gods' reactions to the rites.

The intensive qualities of the hybrid space-time continuums of ritual events open up worlds of difference for their participants. They generate an experience not unlike that of parallel universes—worlds in which, for example, the Cultural Revolution both did and did not exist.

The 'revival' of ritual activities in China after the Cultural Revolution is an apparent paradox—what is typically placed under the sign of tradition in opposition to the modern became prominent under modernization and in conjunction with global capital.¹ This paradox

¹ The following passages are based on Dean and Lamarre, 2003; 2007, with many modifications. For additional discussion of concepts such as syncretic field and ritual event, see Dean 1998.

is the effect of a crude historical ordering (premodern, modern, post-modern or late modern) that clearly collapses in the context of these ritual activities, not to mention the realities of the world generally. The analysis of ritual events in the Putian plains offers a different way to understand the contemporary co-existence and potential co-operation of ritual and capital in contemporary southeast China.

The syncretic ritual field and the ritual event

From the descriptions of rituals in the Putian plains given above, and from the historical overview of the introduction and adaptation of many different kinds of ritual traditions into Putian over time, one can see that contemporary ritual events are complex collective actions with many different participants in different roles. These ritual events are characterized by multiple and mixed liturgical frameworks, and events unfold in multiple centers of activity. These rituals display competing tendencies towards order and chaos. They seem to be able to evade being captured within any one frame (capitalist, nationalist, even localist), but instead generate multiple frames of reference. Here we will discuss first the historical layers of the syncretic ritual field, then fundamental opposing tendencies within rituals, and then the multiple centers of activity. We will ask what questions these features raise for a theory of ritual.

From the historical overview above, one can construct a conception of the syncretic field of Chinese ritual practice as having been built up over many centuries through innovations in ritual practice into a multi-layered field of forces (symbolic, cosmic, political, socio-economic). Each layer or plane of ritual experience was generated by a particular ritual tradition—from spirit possession to Buddhist rites, to Confucian ancestral rites, and Daoist collective rites for regional alliances—each of these traditions was the central, most powerful ritual form of a particular era. All these layers or planes were generated by ritual forms that demand specific ranges of bodily experience, require collective labor and resources, and mobilize cosmological forces. Multiple planes/layers of ritual form co-exist in the syncretic field. Any one individual may take part in rituals of many different layers of the field by attending events in a Buddhist monastery, a village temple, a lay Buddhist or Three in One hall, or a regional procession. More importantly for an understanding of the ritual field, however, is that the co-presence of these different layers/planes of ritual forms allows

for the continuous creation of new hybrid ritual forms through the interactions between layers of the field, through processes of infinitesimal imitation, opposition, and adaptation. Every ritual form borrows elements from the others. Individuals are part of many such hybrid forms. One can be a ritual specialist in more than one tradition. Moreover, given the multiple liturgical frameworks found within contemporary rituals in Putian, one finds elements of all the earlier layers actively playing a role in specific events today. Thus each ritual event folds in all the layers of the syncretic field, and unfolds them through its sequence of actions taking place simultaneously in multiple centers.

The syncretic field can also be analyzed in terms of two opposing tendencies, which can be called, drawing on indigenous concepts, *Sheng* 聖 (saintly power of self-cultivation) and *Ling* 靈 (spontaneous cosmological power). *Sheng* activities include the careful laying out of a cosmologically oriented altar, visualization of the invited deities, invocation of the deities through swiftly shifting *mudras*, spells, and commands, courtly ritual actions such as offerings and the preparation, recitation, and transmission through burning of memorials and other bureaucratic documents. The *Ling* pole is evident in spirit possession of mediums, spontaneous transmission of trance states through a crowd, and even in the moment of transformation of some ritual specialists into higher deities (*bianshen* 變身). The ritual-field is stretched between these bi-polar attractors. At different moments in the course of their discrete liturgies, ritual specialists may move away from one pole towards the other. Worshippers in the community also are drawn back and forth between more orderly forms of worship and the exuberance and excitement of the event.

The multiplicity and hybrid nature of the liturgical frameworks, together with the multiple centers of action of ritual events make it difficult (and unhelpful) to interpret the ritual from a single perspective (as the embodiment of a particular belief system or value system, or as the sincere expression of one person's beliefs). Doubling the underlying framework (mediated relations to cosmological forces vs. unmediated relations with local deities) does not get one much further. One needs an approach to a multitudinous ritual event as experienced from multiple nodes of perception rather than insisting on subjective agency (consciousness) as the only point of departure for an analysis of ritual.

Microsociology of the ritual event

A theoretical resource for this analysis can be found in the work of Gabriel Tarde, an early sociological thinker. Tarde emphasizes the laws of imitation, opposition, and adaptation at all levels of society, and his definition of society is very inclusive (it extends to any grouping of beings or even molecules). More importantly for our purposes, Tarde introduces a micro-sociology into his theory of social laws. He stresses different levels of perceptions, reactions, and actions within each individual (a society of molecules), while also examining each individual as part of a set of larger social groups. The individual in Tarde's view is made up of many levels of perception/awareness—and different points of view may emerge at different levels within the same individual. Tarde adopts the terminology of Leibniz and describes the individual as composed of monads—different points of view—from self-conscious mind to proprioceptive awareness to layers of mood and affect to pre-conscious sensitivity to unconscious levels of awareness. Each of these different nodes of perception, or monads, have differing appetites and degrees of perception—and each level, from unconsciousness to conscious, is the result of different aggregates of monads, with some more dominant than others.² In effect, Tarde argues that the individual is multiple, or at least is composed of multiple levels of perception/reaction. Tarde also extends this kind of analysis to group subjectivities (of crowds, armies, monasteries, corporations). Tarde's microsociological approach provides a fresh way of seeing the simultaneous emergence of the individual and the social group. The exploration of the monadic action-mind as an infinitesimal differentiation of the social realm allows one to look at the social from the angle of the event, attending to how social forces emerge at the micro-level, and how change and innovation happen.

Unlike Durkheim, Tarde does not presuppose the existence of the social (as the ultimate determination of each individual, who achieves his unified identity by absorbing the social) but works instead to analyze the concrete mechanisms whereby specific social groups or

² Note that in contrast to Leibniz' model of closed off monads, Tarde's monads are nodes of perception or points of view that are open to one another, and continually interact.

networks are formed. This aspect of Tarde's approach is similar to that of recent versions of ANT (actor-network-theory) as advocated by Bruno Latour and others. ANT looks the systemic interaction of all the elements in a network, including non-human elements such as objects, physical processes, natural resources, and ecological features. This approach can be helpful in thinking through the effects of ecological constraints of the coastal irrigation systems on socio-ritual formations (regional ritual alliances) of the Putian plains. For Tarde, 'every thing is a society, every phenomenon is a social fact', even the mind (Tarde 1999: 58). Psychology thus is central to sociology, and social action emerges from the actions of monadic, multi-layered minds. The mind is a social action.³ There is no separation or opposition between individual human monad and society or collective group. Rather individual and society emerge together, and what looks like the psychic state of an individual turns out to be an integration/differentiation of small social variations.

Tarde's laws of imitation, opposition, and adaptation are ontologically prior to social hierarchies and imposition of social facts. If one reads the laws of imitation sociologically, at the same level as institutions, one completely misses out on molecular movement. Microsociology thus also resonates with Foucault's microhistories which situated subjective technologies and bodies as ontologically prior to modes of production in order to remap modernity. Imitation, opposition, and adaptation work at all levels and scales, both in broad strokes and in infinitesimal ways. Imitation can work to repeat the same. However, through the most infinitesimal of interferences (opposition) or inventions (adaptations), imitation (repetition) can open up difference. Rather than searching for the complete opposite, as in dialectics, Tarde examines the consequences of the smallest forms of opposition, such as acts of hesitation. Rather than looking only at the imitation of great men and great ideas, Tarde discusses cultural invention as the infinitesimal adaptation of techniques and ideas by many people. Different scales of analysis bring out startling distinct qualities of (ritual) activity.

³ Gilles Deleuze comments 'it is completely wrong to reduce Tarde's sociology to a psychologism or even an interpsychology... What Tarde inaugurates is a microsociology, which is not necessarily concerned with what happens between individuals but with what happens within a single individual...' Crucial to a microsociology that would avoid psychologism is an understanding of the individual as a monad (made up of many monads, or points of view at different levels), much as announced in Tarde's *Monadologie et Sociologie*. Deleuze 1994: 312–13, n. 3.

At one level, Tarde sees 'imitation as the repetition of an innovation'. In the context of ritual, this means that the mass of participants are seen simply to imitate the innovations of some great innovator. There is however a deeper level of Tarde's philosophy, at which '(imitation) is repetition which serves difference'. This is also the level at which Tarde turns away from 'impersonal givens or the Ideas of great men' in favor of 'the little ideas of little men'. It is then a matter of 'little inventions and interferences between imitative currents'.⁴

Microsociology is particularly promising approach for the study of ritual activities in southeast China, because those ritual activities have typically been construed in exceedingly Durkheimian terms—as a site of reproduction of the social, as the site of elimination of difference, in which the articulation of local differences or autonomies always appears tenuous at best. By the very terms of this model, local difference is fated to capitulate to the imperial center, with its presumed Confucian order. In other fields there exist other accounts of ritual activities that stress the spontaneous emergence of practices as well as a thoroughgoing renegotiation of the social order, but the general sociological bias to the study of Northeast Asia is geared largely to the reinscription of immutable national or proto-national identities. This is due to the legacy of modernization theory in the formation of area studies, entrenched and unexamined.

Because microsociology thinks the social from the angle of the event, it foregoes the dubious logic of modernization theory, in which the duality of individual and society is transposed onto that of modernity and tradition, thus imposing a situation in which the modern individual struggles against the constraints of traditional society in an attempt to Westernize and modernize, an attempt that is preordained to fail no matter how far modernization advances. But this is not only a problem of area studies. While the refusal to question modernization theory appears most virulent in the context of area studies, it is not unusual for thinkers schooled in the very philosophies of difference that issued a challenge to modernization to replicate it as soon as they step out of the Western enclave.

Tarde's concepts of imitation, opposition, and adaptation can be applied in broad strokes to the history of ritual forms in the Putian plains. For example, at a very basic, institutional level, one might say

⁴ Deleuze 1994: 312–13, n. 3.

that early lineage groups sought to imitate the ritual actions of the aristocracy. Other surname groups showed their opposition to constraints within (or their exclusion from) the classical ancestral worship system by expanding the objects of worship beyond the prescribed five generations of ancestors. Finally, these new, expanded ancestral worship rites were broadly adapted through continual modification by more and more emergent lineages across the Putian plains.

Daoist ritual also clearly imitates court audiences, and Confucian masters of ritual (*Yanshi* in Putian) assist lineage members and temple worshippers in rites also clearly imitative of court ritual and classical rites. We have seen above that Buddhist monks and Three in One Scripture Masters can also perform rituals that are clearly parallel, or imitative, to those of the Daoist ritual masters. Forces of opposition and adaptation can also be seen in the elaboration of different pantheons (cosmological powers) addressed and invoked by these different ritual traditions (opposition), and in the mutual borrowing (adaptation) that has characterized the evolution of their respective liturgies.

All these examples tend to make ritual out to be the machinery of empire, with the imitation of an orthodox court ritual form spreading across the land, with allowances for minor opposition and local adaptations. In this view, ritual as imitation is the repetition of the same, and the repeated re-inscription of the individual into the cultural unity of the state. This perspective ties in neatly with work on Chinese cultural hegemony and ritual orthopraxy, as it even makes allowances for local interpretations and modifications (variation).

Tarde suggests that there is another, deeper level of the laws of imitation (repetition), opposition (hesitation) and adaptation (invention) which is best explored at the bodily level of individual experience (micro-sociology). What, one might ask, is the possessed spirit medium imitating, in his highly stylized trance movements? When one's actions become close to involuntary, who is doing the imitating? In any case, Tarde points out that imitation at a more profound level can be understood as a repetition of difference in itself (that which continues to self-differentiate), and thus the opening up of new worlds of experience at the molecular, individual, and group levels. This openness of imitation to difference is the "apparent paradox of ritual, which is designed to repeat the unrepeatable."

Looking at the development of ritual forms in the Putian plains in this way, one can find in ritual an engine of social change, rather than only a machinery for the imposition of the same (cultural uni-

cation, identification with the state). In this perspective, ritual is also not reduced to a general social glue mediating different state and local institutions, or a pressure valve outlet for social dissent, or a structural originary indetermination that can only be displaced. All these approaches (including the cultural hegemonic approach) make ritual into a conduit for something else, or the means to an end—cultural unification, individual identity, social harmony, rather than something in itself. If one looks at the entire range of experiences involved in a ritual event, one can instead argue that ritual-experience is the collective actualization of (potentially new) worlds, rather than (only) the re-imposition of pre-determined ideas or social relations.

Metastability of the gods

Another extraordinary feature of the rituals of the Putian plains is the sheer number and diversity of gods. These multiple deities constitute a metastable system. Before explaining this conception, it is important to point out the gods are represented differently within the same ritual event by: 1) ritual masters whose texts describe them as avatars of higher astral gods; 2) by temple leaders who see the gods as ambivalent protectors of the locale; 3) by possessed mediums who act as the god in the flesh; 4) by village households who see the gods as forces of exorcism, purification and blessing; 5) by individual worshippers who may see the gods as sources of divine support (or punishment) and as potential interlocutors, deities who respond to prayers, offerings, even bribes, and whose response can appear in divination blocks or poems, in spirit writing, in dreams and visions, or in miraculous responses to prayers. What is most significant about all these different representations (there are no doubt others) is the taboo on contradiction—each accepts the other representations without insisting on logical or doctrinal inconsistencies. Or to put the matter differently, one finds in the multiplicity of representations, mode of invocation, and cosmological powers of the gods the workings of a (collective) positive unconscious, which accepts all these representations/powers as different manifestations of cosmological force.

Not only can there be more than one deity (or more than one representation of the same deity), but also each resident deity is multivalent, embodying and emanating different qualities, which shift over time. It is the inherent multiplicity of deities that allows for temple and ritual

alliances: Among its many qualities, each deity has some aspects that permit connection with the deities in other temples.

The multiplicity of the gods is not an inert multiplicity, a neutral collection of differences. For the deities are metastable. The metastability of the gods is evidenced in their double personalities and multiple personalities. A physical system is said to be in metastable equilibrium (or false equilibrium) when the least modification serves to break the equilibrium.⁵ Any system in a metastable state harbors potentials that are incompatible insofar as they belong to heterogeneous dimensions. This is why systems in a metastable state can only perpetuate themselves by dephasing, that is, by a change in the state of the system.⁶

Moving the Gods, releasing forces

Moving a deity from its perch in a temple is a powerful act, one that potentially alters an entire field of forces. Summoning a deity opens its fundamental asymmetry or instability. In other words, by moving the metastable deities, the ritual event releases the force implicit in their fundamental asymmetry, and then establishes two different yet interrelated relations to that force—*sheng* and *ling*—what might be thought of as polar attractors in what is now a field of forces. Within a field of forces, a systems theory model of feedback, regular repetition, perturbant flows, and the modulation of forces provides one way of analyzing the unfolding of the ritual event.

Moving the gods serves to transform their ‘instability’ into a force (or to dephase their metastability). The carefully prepared and over-coded space of the altar of the ritual master is designed to prevent a chaotic, undirected release of that force. The idea is to harness and guide it. This controlled relation to cosmological forces is what we refer to as *sheng*, for it evokes self-cultivation, sageliness, and hierar-

⁵ A prime example is crystallization. With super-saturated solutions and super-chilled liquids, for instance, introducing the smallest impurity with a structure isomorphic with the crystal serves as a seed for crystallization.

⁶ Our account of the metastable follows from that of Muriel Combes in *Simondon. Individu et collectivité* (Presses Universitaires de France, 2000), especially her explanation of the preindividual and the more-than-one (10–12). We subsequently extend the notion of dephasing (change of state) by reference to symmetry breaking as discussed by Ian Stewart in *Nature's Numbers: The Unreal Reality of Mathematics* (Basic Books, 1995).

chical codes. In terms of the practices of ritual masters, *sheng* implies controlled processes of self-transformation—techniques of visualization, the recitation of ‘secret’ mantra, performance of *mudras*, and choreography—all of which lead to identification with a divinity in a stepwise, encoded fashion. However, the ritual master in the *sheng* mode simultaneously works within hierarchical overcoding and at the same time carefully decodes signs in order to move upward in the hierarchical ladder—until the point that he reaches the divinity itself.

At the other extreme is what we have called *ling*, which is best exemplified in spirit possession—which involves trance, loss of self, spontaneous and uncontrolled bodily movements, and speaking in the voices of gods. *Ling* finds pure repetition across *sheng*’s hierarchical distinctions, in order to stage improbable, unlikely, magical connections between different times and spaces (phases) of sagely ascent. It decodes and deterritorializes coded objects and states, but most importantly, *ling* dephases. It treats *sheng* hierarchies as a metastable state in their excess of order and symmetry. In dephasing, symmetry is at once broken and retained. *Ling* thus calls on the deity’s eccentricity as a non-localizable force. Trance, for instance, makes the first step and the top of the ladder indistinguishable—it is an automatic identification with the gods, which comes with automatism, that is, tics and twitches and babble.

Thus the relation between *sheng* and *ling* is, in some way, a non-relation. *Ling* is always undermining the coded relations of *sheng* yet has no purchase without them. *Sheng* continually brings *ling* into relation, but in fact, cannot relate anything without it. Their relation then is non-dialectical, and yet the co-existence of these two different modes of relation to the gods leads to the emergence of something new.

Moving the gods—containing forces through hesitation, integration, and paired opposition

To return to the moment of the moving of the gods from the temple at the start of the procession, one notes that the sedan chair moves back and forth several times before heading off on the procession. A similar pattern is repeated upon the return of the god’s palanquin at the end of the procession. What is the significance of this hesitation? As discussed above, the deity’s mind acts in more than one place at the same time. Deities are poised between earth and some other celestial

realm. Thus the hesitation of the deity to come forth from the temple, all the efforts to cajole and usher it out, can be understood in terms of infinitesimal social opposition. The deity, its action-mind, integrates the small variations of opposition in the social order—across villages, within a village, between village and cosmos.

How is this integration achieved? Despite the potential in its multiple personality for infinite connections within and among villages, the deity tends to settle into opposed pairs of traits (small yet big, earthly yet divine, benevolent yet malign—or at another level, us versus them). In this way, the deity can be said to deploy opposition to form a limited whole which polarizes and standardizes difference, but which guarantees that difference is in the service of repetition of the same. Taking as an example of the division of the sexes in evolution, Deleuze writes:

Opposition...is only the figure by means of which a difference is distributed throughout repetition in order to limit it and to open up a new order or a new infinity: for example, when the parts of life are opposed in pairs, it renounces any indefinite growth or multiplication in order to form limited wholes. Nevertheless, life thereby attains an infinity of another kind, a different sort of repetition: that of generation.

In other words, at this level, difference serves repetition, and the result is the limitation of the whole that diminishes the random multiplication (of species, life-forms, cross-species changes) and puts it in the service of (a particular species') generation, which is a limited kind of multiplication. However, evolution is not so simple, or so neatly confined, as species continue to evolve.

The processes of hesitation become a process of integration through the containment of the forces of multiplication within a limited whole. The deity becomes closely identified with its village. Its force of cosmological multiplication (a deity that potentially harbors all deities within it) turns into a force of generation for the village. This is a largely agrarian sense of generation—the prolixity of grains and domestic beasts and male offspring. So it is that the limitation of multiplication to generation confirms the deity's role in bestowing its blessing on the village's productivity. This explains why the deity must hesitate, if it is to integrate social opposition into the collective of the ritual event, infinitesimally. The deity's act of integration can (and usually does) have territorial implications (this is its village), and the deity may serve to integrate social opposition into a territorial or ethnic subject. However, many actions within the ritual event work simulta-

neously to open up the multiplicity of the gods, resulting in “interferences between imitative currents”,⁷ which turns repetition into a force which serves difference.

Moving the gods—Sheng and Ling practices

If the movements of the deities can be confined to the repetition of paired oppositions in order to generate a conservative force of repetition of the same eternally, there are other aspects of the invocations of the gods that disrupt these oppositions. While the deity is being moved from the temple in a sedan chair around the village or the alliance, the ritual masters are simultaneously inviting the deity to the altar of the higher gods. Spirit mediums are sporadically possessed by the gods as well.

Sheng practices involve a process of sensory-motor experimentation not unlike what Tarde thinks of as invention, or as Deleuze points out, “infinitesimal social adaptation”. This is because the controlled processes of self-transformation which lead to identification with a divinity in a stepwise, encoded fashion require the ritual master to first build up a cosmologically coded hierarchical ladder or magic mountain, and then ascend it in a step by step fashion. *Sheng* “at this level is a force of adaptation, by means of which ‘the repetitive currents meet and become integrated into superior repetitions.’” (Deleuze 1994: 312–13, n. 3).

At this level, *sheng* might appear to occlude a deeper experience of difference, precisely because, as the figure of adaptation, “difference appears between two kinds of repetition, and each repetition presupposes a difference of the same degree as itself.” At this level, *sheng* makes the relation between finite and infinite appear manageable and controllable. Surely this is why esoteric approaches often have such an easy relation with the powers at hand, and with state formations.

However, the problem for *sheng* processes is that it is always in a paradoxical relationship with the heights (or the depths) of identification with the gods. *Sheng* can also be understood as a process of sensory-motor experimentation that *integrates* the bodily adaptations of the practitioner. In this view, *sheng* implies not only adaptation but

⁷ Deleuze 1994: 312–13, n. 3.

also invention, and invention is in turn *infinitesimal* social adaptation. Simply put, there is a paradox within *sheng* practices: because the deity at the pinnacle is ultimately multiple, the practitioner cannot simply ascend to the peak; the adept must simultaneously move sideways, eccentrically, toward potentially infinite centers. In order to overcome this infinite drift, the ritual master has to constantly experiment with different techniques.

At the other extreme is what we call *ling*, best exemplified in spirit possession, that is, possession by a deity or demon, which involves trance, loss of self, spontaneous and uncontrolled bodily movements, and speaking in the voices of gods. *Ling* appears to be all depth. Its depth comes not of a simple outside, nor is *ling* an inner depth (interiority) in relation to *sheng*. It recalls the “inside of the outside” evoked in Deleuze’s discussion of Foucault (Deleuze 1988: 120). The loss of self in trance, for instance, implicates an inside deeper than interiority, one that is also ecstatic (opening to outside)—limbs twitching and tongues speaking in response to the deities’ passage. *Ling* might be thought of as a radical scrambling of all the material and sensory paraphernalia of esoteric practices. *Ling* appears closer to what Deleuze calls “the deeper level” of Tarde’s laws at which “repetition serves difference” (Deleuze 1994: 312–13, n. 3). *Ling* is a form of infinitesimal diffusion (adaptation), but it is “diffusion as repetition of perturbation”. *Ling* is sensory-motor perturbation as infinitesimal social diffusion, leading to non-hierarchized integration.⁸ To return to the feedback model introduced above in relation to the force field of the ritual event, this kind of perturbation can suddenly transform the entire field in unexpected ways by working primarily at the affective, infra-corporeal and inter-corporeal levels.

This section has outlined three instances of Tarde’s laws of imitation, opposition, and adaptation in relation to aspects of the ritual event. 1) We examined processes of opposition in the hesitation and duplicity of the deity interpreted as infinitesimal social opposition that had the effect of social integration and collective identification,⁹

⁸ Ecstatic trance states can be transmitted instantaneously through a crowd at a Chinese ritual event. Note that most rural, popular Chinese ritual activity does not center on the transmission of articles of faith (doctrinal beliefs with corresponding rites), but rather on broader modes of ritual actions addressed to a multitudinous group of local deities.

⁹ But on the other hand, we also noted that the metastability of the gods and the multiplicity of relations of cosmological powers was opened up through the multiple modes of invoking cosmological powers at work simultaneously in the ritual event.

(2) We discussed two modes of adaptation, by looking at both *sheng* and the *ling* tendencies. At the *sheng* pole we found that the regulated actions of the ritual masters were on the one hand a form of integrated repetition (as in a feedback model). However, at the individual practitioner's experiential level this entailed constant sensory-motor experimentation with the decoding of hierarchical structures in search of identification with the gods, which can also be seen as a kind of infinitesimal social adaptation through the invention of techniques. Finally we examined the diffusion of perturbation in trance-like experiences as infinitesimal social diffusion. Taking up a feedback model again, all these processes can give rise to unanticipated interactions and changes across the system. Each of these examples point to an understanding of ritual as not simply a form of imitation as a repetition of the same, but instead as an opening up of repetition (imitation) to the power of difference in itself.

Movement of the gods—movement through multiple nodes of perception

The movements of the deities—in loops around the village territory, or in repeated invocations to the altar of the ritual masters, or in sporadic possession of the spirit mediums—generate multiple nodes of perception in the overall ritual event. These movements spin minor resonant loops—some planned, others spontaneous—that become minor worlds in the sense that they are performative sites with coherent viewing positions. In this respect as well, the movement of the gods fits the model of feedback and transformation. The deities are a kind of immanent cause—a non-localizable symmetry-breaking that generates new phases by dephasing—nevertheless the deities, like the metastable state, remain immanent in the phases.

Performative nodes also spring up around ritual objects such as the incense burner or the palanquin, or even around the opera performance—they are like monadic points of view on the ritual event. It is possible to see and experience the entire ritual event from any one of these nodes. In fact, some villagers are clearly there for the opera, others to ogle the crowd or to eat, while others arrive to entreat the deities. Of course, each node sees some parts of the event more distinctly and others more obscurely; each has its truth.

The many eyes of the gods

The ritual event is nonetheless able to cohere, because one always has recourse to the deities in order to say, “I didn’t see the ritual masters summon the deities, but I know this took place, and so my experience is relative to that overall event.” In this way, the overall truth of the ritual event is preserved, and the formation of different nodes of performance and viewing positions does not undermine the position of the deities. So as long as the deities provide some kind of overall view, the different nodes of the event do not become entirely self-referential; they remain open to the deities and to one another. Indeed the ritual event does imply something like a supreme or all-gathering witness—such as heaven, or the pantheon of the gods.

However, such a view of the ritual event represents the view from above in which: everything moves from the top down, from the great innovator to the masses, from a god-like creator to the worlds. It also places difference at the service of repetition, in which the difference between action-minds becomes homogeneous, implying some kind of pre-established harmony among them. Tarde’s microsociology bids us to turn to a deeper level at which repetition “is what enables us to pass from one order of difference to another... Repetition, therefore, is not the process by which difference is augmented and diminished, but the process by which it ‘goes on differing’ and ‘takes itself as its end’”. It is a “difference ‘which opposes nothing and which serves no purpose’, which is ‘the final end of all things.’” (Deleuze 1994: 312–13, n. 3).

The relation between the different nodes of perception in the ritual event is closer to Bakhtin’s sense of polyphony than to Leibniz’s pre-established harmony. Bakhtin was interested in festival and carnival, and in the multitude’s overturning of established hierarchies and harmonies. At some deeper level, the ritual event is always a matter of the “differently different”, even when it seems to result in the re-affirmation of local power structures replete with inequalities.

Ritual autonomy and global capitalism

The ritual event is characterized by the great potential for autonomy each node of perception has in relation to other nodes and to the deities. This is precisely why ritual activities in Fujian province are able to serve as conduits for, and refractors of, state capital, global capital, and

local economies. The danger, of course, is that local, state, or global formations will exploit the autonomies of the ritual event in order to frame the temporality of modernity against the multiple temporalities of the ritual event, as a simple and indifferent opposition. The best could hope for in such circumstances would be a form of alternative modernity, which would simply delay the inevitable subsumption of all relations by capital. This is a real danger because the power of capital also lies in its immanence, in its ability to work within and transform hierarchical formations of local powers. This movement of capital tends to generate contradictions in the ritual space of non-contradictions, which then usually demand resolution in the form of local or national identity.

Both ritual and capital produce worlds. As Lazzarato puts it, "How to understand concepts of labor, production, cooperation and communication when capitalism is not only a mode of production but *a production of worlds?*" (Lazzarato 2004). The infinitesimal world production of the ritual event asks us to think differently from capital but not oppositionally. It bids us to consider the differently different between capital and ritual. For the ritual event is not simply an obstacle to the movement of capital or a contradiction within it. The promise of a microsociology of contemporary ritual activities in south-east China lies in the attention it calls to its production of worlds. This ability of the ritual event opens into questions about the local evolution of historical technologies of the subject in the Putian plains, such as the ritual power formation briefly introduced above. The continuing power of these ritual events to absorb and yet not be completely transformed by flows of global capital raises important questions as to the negotiation of modernity in contemporary Putian.

Summary of concluding questions

In a lecture delivered in Japan, Michel Foucault drew some comparisons between pastoral power and the impact of Confucianism in China and Japan:

... it would be worthwhile to compare the pastorate, the pastoral power of Christian societies, with that which may have been the role and the effects of Confucianism in the societies of the Far East. One must note the quasi-coincidental timing of the two, one must note how the role of pastoral power was important in the formation of the State in the 16th

and the 18th centuries in Europe, a bit like Confucianism had been in Japan in the Tokutawa (sic) era. But one must also make a difference between pastoral power and Confucianism: the pastorate was essentially religious, Confucianism was not; the pastorate grasped an objective situated in the beyond and never intervened here below except as a function of that beyond, whereas Confucianism played essentially a terrestrial role; Confucianism grasped a general stability in the social body by a set of general rules which are imposed either on every individual or on each category of individual, whereas the pastorate established a relation of individualized obedience between the pastor and his flock; finally, the pastorate had, by means of the techniques it employed (spiritual direction, care for the soul) individualizing effects which Confucianism did not carry. (*Gendai no Kenryoku wo tou (The analytic philosophy of politics)* Asahi Jaanaru 2 June 2, 1978, pp. 28–35 (Conference given on April 27, 1978 in the Asahi Kodo conference center in Tokyo, at the Asahi newspaper headquarters)). *Dits et Ecrits*, Vol. 3, 549–50.

Foucault was deeply impressed by the power of Confucianism, even going so far as to remark earlier in the same lecture:

...there never was in the West, at least not for a long time, a philosophy which was able to form one body with a political practice, a moral practice of an entire society. The West has never known the equivalent of Confucianism, that is to say a form of thinking which, in reflecting on the order of the world, or in establishing it, prescribes at the same time the structure of the State, the form of social relations, and the conduct of individuals, and which prescribes these effectively in the reality of history. (*Dits et Ecrits*, 3.538).

But Foucault was at least aware that other traditions and techniques of the body were practiced in Japan, as can be seen in his brief remarks on the importance of posture (Zen sitting) on the occasion of a visit to a Zen monastery. As Sakai and Solomon (2006) have recently pointed out, Foucault is aware of the impasse of isolated Western thought and calls for a new philosophy to emerge outside the parameters of Western imperialism. Yet in other respects, his discourse falls back upon cultural essentialism and Orientalism. Clearly, Foucault had little knowledge or understanding of the complexities of East Asian cultures and its many varied technologies of the self and forms of subjectivation.

Contrary to Foucault's assumptions about the unchanging, all-powerful nature of Confucianism throughout Chinese history, one can detect a number of major shifts within Confucianism itself, and its relation to power and ideology in Chinese history. However, one can take up Foucault's methods and discover within Chinese history the formation of a number of new regimes of power combining words

(discursive regimes) and things (institutions and visual regimes) in unanticipated ways. One such historical break—the rise of a new formation of power which we call ritual power, which began to emerge in Southeast China in the 16th century, in the late Ming, centered on the ritual events of popular religious temples and regional ritual alliances.

The elements that combine in this new flow/form of power cannot in fact all be termed Confucian. Nevertheless, even mainstream Neo-Confucianism underwent major changes. The most significant for the processes described in here was the challenge posed by the Heart-Mind School of Neo-Confucian philosophy of Wang Yangming in the 16th century to the mainstream Neo-Confucian School of Principle of Zhu Xi (1120–1200). If the structural homologies mentioned above by Foucault between state and family and individual propriety had been a major feature of the 12th–13th century Zheng-Zhu School, by the 16th century a great many cracks had appeared in the ideological system. Wang Yangming's efforts to repair these breakdowns through an emphasis on *liangzhi* 良知 (intuitive understanding of the good) opened the way to a range of radical local reform initiatives by his followers, especially in Jiangxi and Zhejiang (such as the Taigu philosophic and religious movement). In particular, the philosophy of Li Zhi 李贊 (1527–1602), whose early attack on the hypocrisy of conventional Confucianism, his assault on the status of classics, and his championing of popular literature and bodily self-cultivation seems to prefigure later critiques by Japanese scholars such as Ogai and Ito (Sakai 1991). However, we do not argue here that these developments in the history of ideas explain the epistemic shift in the late Ming. On the contrary, they can be seen as one element in the emergence of a new discursive regime which explored the powers of the local and the regional in new ways. In several mid-Ming inscriptions from Putian in the late 16th century one finds the key claim that *li yi yi qi* “(Ritual arises from the intentions (of the ritual participants)”. This is in fact a radical claim for innovation in ritual practice, and can be found already in the Cheng Zhu school of NeoConfucianism. What is striking about these inscriptions is that they are not primarily philosophic interventions, but instead concrete monuments inscribed in the space of ritual activities inside temples within the emergent ritual alliances of Putian. In the late Ming, many followers of Wang Yangming were social activists who did not contribute to the increasingly sterile debates between the philosophic schools, but who instead devoted

their lives to forming new alliances with local groups and movements, including the emergent temple networks of the Putian region. In this context, the rise of the Three in One movement can be understood as a radical effort to apply Confucian self-cultivation to both individual pursuit of enlightenment and to a broad-based reform of social morality (through the force of example of the conduct and the ritual practice of members of the movement).

The newly emergent power formation of late Ming China can be referred to as 'ritual power formation'. This mode of production and performance of power was built upon the 'non-relation' of the evolving rituals of local religion, which rather than imposing a particular ideology or belief system, managed instead to generate the linking together of a range of new institutions, new ritual forms and liturgical frameworks, and performative regimes and processes of subjectivation, regardless of any seeming contradictions or incompatibilities. These new institutions and regimes of expression/performance include genealogical inscriptions of (ritual) identity in lineage formations which soon mutated beyond Confucian models, new modes of local mobilization, self-organization, self-regulation and self-definition embodied in community compacts and local temple organizations, and further expressed in epigraphical and scriptural accounts of the local gods and their myths, and a range of new performative expressions of the manifestation of power within shifting local pantheons in the many emerging forms of regional opera, the newly forming popular novels, and local performances of spirit possession and spirit-writing. Ritual power can be explored as a newly emergent diagrammatic flowchart of power that circulates in the interstices between newly developed networks and institutions in late Ming Putian. Ritual power generates new forms of subjectivation, new registers of identity, new techniques of the body, and new forms of mobilization and organization of the village communities.

This ritual power formation can be understood as one kind of "cultural nexus of power" as described by Duara (1988) in relation to Shandong in the late 19th and early 20th century. Duara noted many of the elements that make up what he described as "the cultural nexus of power": temple networks, lineages, irrigation societies, and crop-watching associations, but he did not examine in great detail the history of the Shandong nexus. Other local cultures of China developed their own unique nexuses of power, composed of a different configuration of elements, and undergoing distinct historical developments in separate parts of China.

In contrast to the rather apocalyptic tone of Duara's (1988) discussion of the destructive impact of modernity upon the "cultural nexus of power" in Shandong, the recent resurgence of ritual alliances in the Putian plain demonstrates that cultural nexuses can continue to evolve even after the shock of the impacts of modernizations (whether Maoist, socialist with Chinese characteristics, or increasingly capitalist and globalized). The current "cultural nexus of power" in the Putian plains can be traced back to the rise of a new ritual power formation beginning in the mid-Ming. By mobilizing the local population through ritual means, Ming Putian elites found a way to assert control over the maintenance of the irrigation system in a situation where compromise and mutual assistance was imposed by the environmental limits of the irrigation system. This would indicate a major change from lineage based power to temple based multi-lineage patterns of control and maintenance of the irrigation system.

An ecological grid of rationality subtends the ritual alliances which developed out of and in relation to the irrigation system. This network of coastal tides, rivers, channels, canals, sluice-gates, reservoirs, and paddy-fields, along with their natural villages, village temples, and higher order temples, provided the underlying framework similar to that provided by the agricultural lands of the parishes, village churches and cathedrals of the Catholic church in the pastoral power formation described by Foucault. These ritual alliances transformed early models of kinship, perhaps more closely tied to Foucault's vision of Confucianism, by deterritorializing and dispersing lineages, and by absorbing them throughout a broad range of ritual activities. This process was one of many potential (and ongoing) transformations of the Chinese lineage, which in many cases in the Putian area became something closer to a transnational joint stock corporation, with membership shares for sale. Transversal connections between networks became an important feature of these emergent ritual alliances, as higher order temples and processions were established. In some respects, although these new connections were taking place in a polytheistic ritual sphere, there was little appeal to a transcendental realm, as was the case in the pastoral power formation described by Foucault. In that case, pastoral power's individualizing and totalizing tendencies paved the way for the transition from a sovereign mode of power to a modern disciplinary society and later to a society of control. In the local Putian context, one can find at this period emergent levels of local autonomy within ritual power formations that achieve some independence from homologies of imperial sovereign power.

A broad range of official institutional reforms were adopted by the Ming and Qing courts, but what is more interesting from the perspective of local history is the unintended consequences of these reforms as seen in the mutations these institutions underwent in the Putian plains. Each of these local mutations evolved into networks throughout the region, which in turn interacted with other networks, generating new formations and potentialities. As each network developed, they generated unexpected effects on other networks, or reached bifurcation points in their own developments that transformed them through linkages with other networks. The complex interactions between different networks generated new potentialities within the evolving system. The changing “consistencies of relations” generated in this process would have been experienced as a process of cultural experimentation by villagers and local cultural mediators in the Putian plains. One might ask which networks were available to which agents in villages at different periods in Putian history. What forces (economic, human, cosmological) were mobilized within these different networks, and how did these networks transform the subjectivities of their participants? And how did geographic configurations generate ecological constraints on the development of these multi-layered networks?

Any network consists of its points or nodes, the lines between these points, or its links, and the flows between them—each of these three aspects is of equal importance. The complexity of the relations within each node (village, or other association), for example, those between lineages, social classes, genders, or other temple communities, will effect that node’s relations with other nodes in the network. A potentially very large number of networks may overlap in a single village-node, linking that village to different networks. The complexity of the networks available to any village reflects the variety of spatial relations (virtual, imaginary, or spatially extended alliances) that could be accessed, no doubt unequally, by different villagers. We might ask of these ritual networks to what degree they overlap with political space, market hierarchies, transnational networks, or other religious spaces. What kind of elements (technological changes, experimental social or religious movements, innovations in cultural management) moved transversally through different networks, in blocks of becoming that generated new social and cultural possibilities?

When one traces the various vertical lines of institutional change over time, one can follow the cracks that form as the lines give rise to blocks of becoming that move across state-society relations in unpre-

dictable ways. For although the people of Putian were deeply imbued with Confucian cultural values, they were never simply a blank slate, or an uncarved block passively awaiting further Confucianization. Rich local ritual traditions were expressed in the ritual events of many groups and ethnicities in Tang and Song Putian. In time this region would become the most successful of all the regions in China in terms of the production of officials. They also were amongst the first regions to experiment with lineage forms of ancestral worship, a point noted with some awe by Zhu Xi, who may have sensed that developments in ancestral worship in Putian were rapidly morphing away from his own stricter and more limited model of worship. But rather than abandon past experience and modalities in a whole-scale conversion to Confucianism, the cultural resources of the Putian area continued to pile up new dimensions on the 'plane of non-contradiction'. Successive state institutional initiatives encountered an incomprehensibly complex ground of local and trans-regional ritual traditions, cult networks, voluntary associations, kin and pseudo-kinship groups, regional alliances, and flows of capital, ideas, images, and practices from throughout the Asian trading network.

These regional ritual alliances are maintained by the repeated performance of rituals, including the invitation of the gods from their perches in the temples out into a procession first around the spiritual and territorial boundaries of the village, and then in a larger procession to the other villages of the alliance. Some larger processions combine several regional ritual alliances in circuits around 60 or 70 villages. At the center of these processions are rituals performed at the main village temples by Daoist ritual specialists, Three in One Ritual Masters, or other local ritual specialists. A vast assortment of individual worshippers, visiting delegations from allied villages, rotating temple leaders and their families, and patrons of opera performed for the gods all gather into the central spaces before the temples. Each family also pays an obligatory per capita fee to the temple, and arranges offerings and fireworks to greet the deities on their processions around the village. Ritual roles within the temple leadership, management of the ritual activities, and the concrete ritual roles within the procession and the larger ritual event are filled by rotation with representatives from each household. Accounts of temple income and expenditures are openly posted on the temple walls. This transparency of accounting is a crucial element of the openness of ritual power.

These processes of collective mobilization and rotation of leadership are subjective technologies that are at the same time totalizing (at the level of the collective village) and individualizing (at the level of the *jia* (family) as a ritual unit).¹⁰ All families are mobilized for the ritual and the processions, and each family is eventually represented through rotation in the temple leadership committee. While one might argue that one serves on the temple management committee not as an individual, but as a category (a member of the community in good standing), in fact this form of rotating leadership provides the opportunity for the expression of individual skills and enthusiasms, in the areas of managerial skill and reasoned consensus building. Similar scope for individual expression is found in the performative dimension of many of the roles in the ritual event.¹¹

It is important to point out that just as the network of regional ritual alliances has been evolving for over 500 years, so too the ritual system is an open-ended one, open to innovation and in fact insistent on change, competitive performance, and the absorption of new socio-economic and political forces. Such an approach challenges the claims for cultural hegemony and unity in sinological studies of late imperial China. After reacting against extreme claims regarding totalitarian control in Qing China by Wittfogel and his student Hsiao Kung-ch'uan, many scholars in the '70s and '80's veered in the opposite direction, and attempted to highlight the positive aspects of Qing administration by exploring the role of the state and the "good official" in famine relief, flood control, or irrigation projects. Meanwhile, anthropologists and historians increasingly turned to a cultural hegemonic model to explain the purported unity of Chinese culture and the political control of the Qing empire. Thus theories have been proposed of a symbolic system that featured "hierarchical encompassment" that

¹⁰ The totalizing aspect of the pastoral power (all souls under God) and its individualizing effects (the confession of sin as the truth telling of each individual under the watch of the pastor) worked at a simultaneously very abstract theological level (sin) and at an intensely personal level (guilt and shame, and their absolution via ritual). These qualities of abstract totality and individuation would be reprised in a different formation of power under the modern nation state with the rise of nationalism and individual rights. Very different but equally strong power relations and modes of individuation are at work in village ritual orders, whether based in lineage formations, temple alliances, or a combination of both.

¹¹ The discussion of microsociology above suggests the need to move beyond crude dichotomies of individual versus group identity, and to take into account the multiple layers of perception, awareness, agency and responsiveness at work within ritual performativity.

continually recuperates and overcomes challenges to the symbolic order (Sangren 1987). Other approaches (Watson 1985) have argued for “orthopractic” control, arguing that ritual form was standardized across the empire without regard for local interpretations of the meanings of the rites, leading nevertheless to cultural and political unity and control. Recently some historians (Rawski 1998) have focused on the strategic emphasis on ritual in the Qing court, again showing the role of ritual practice in achieving cultural hegemony. Faure (2007) has argued for the spread of Confucian social models of lineage formations, along with lineage ritual, as a key element in the achievement of cultural identification with the State—a process he charts for the Pearl River delta in the 16th century, but which he argues occurred at different times via a combination of means in various parts of China. The emphasis is once again on cultural process of unification. Faure (2007) charts a gentrification of society, in which the newly arisen gentry strives for ever more legitimacy from the state.

In contrast to these approaches, it is possible to examine the formation of a new regime of power from below as it took different forms in different times and places. However, rather than conceiving of this power from below in terms of a social revolution or a form of resistance constantly displacing or temporarily inverting imperial power, it would be interesting to think instead in terms of a third term: namely the formation of new kinds of bodies and communities within new technologies of subjectivity. Rather than abandoning past experiences and modalities in a whole-scale conversion to Confucianism, the cultural resources of the Putian area continued to pile up new dimensions within an expanding cultural reservoir.

Thinking local or regional history from the point of view of locally emergent modes of power does not deny the rather overwhelming evidence for the high degree of the cultural hegemony of the Confucian state in late imperial China—but it does show the limits of such analysis. No doubt there were many local cultural nexuses of power, different power formations, including ritual-power formations, lineage-power formations, and a wide variety of other local modes of channeling and organizing power across China. Rather than see power only from the imperial perspective as the imposition of a culturally defined unified, hierarchically encompassing, continuum of cosmic authority stretching from the Altar of Heaven to each household shrine to the stove god, we can instead make out a far more complex landscape of alternative workings of local powers and local performances of power.

The meeting point of many of these networks and formations of power were the ritual events of local religion. These ritual events are embedded in historically complex processes of the construction of spatial nodes of multiple networks. These ritual events capture, deform, and transduce lines of force, whether these be forces of state or lineage or cult territorialization, or capitalist, technological, or cultural forces of deterritorialization. In other words, these singular ritual events and the changing forces they produce and mobilize have been involved in a constantly changing negotiation with capital and different state and social formations for centuries.

How were these different institutions and regimes of enunciation held together? Ritual performance has been mentioned above as a primary venue for expression of these new power relations. Indeed, as Geertz argued in relation to Bali, the performance of these rituals was the performance of power. The question is what kind of power? In the ritual events of the Putian plain the power being generated and performed is that of particular communities or ritual alliances expressing a degree of autonomy. One of those powers is the power to generate worlds of difference within ritual that are not absorbed into modernization (cultural tourism) or state control (cultural museumification) but remain vital cosmopolitan resources for villagers in the contemporary Putian region (see Dean and Lamarre 2003; 2007).¹²

If the temple networks of some areas of Putian can now be said to form a “second government”, one which provide services to the locale but also collect funds and mobilizes village populations, then we can see this sector of local governance and relative local autonomy as having evolved slowly since the mid-Ming, and as having shown an ability to respond to the retreat of the state from control over everyday life in imperial as well as contemporary China. The history of this gradual establishment of the institutions, techniques, and practices of local autonomy is an important chapter in the socio-cultural development of China with many implications for the future.

¹² This form of popular performative communal ritual activity requires a rethinking of the theory of *kyokutai* or *gongtongti* in both Japanese and Western Sinology.

PART TWO

LINEAGE AND RELIGION ON THE PUTIAN PLAINS:
AN ANALYSIS BASED ON STONE INSCRIPTIONS

*by Zheng Zhenman
translated by Kenneth Dean*

LINEAGE AND RELIGION ON THE PUTIAN PLAINS: AN ANALYSIS BASED ON STONE INSCRIPTIONS¹

*Zheng Zhenman
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Introduction

The Putian plain is situated on the Xinghua bay in the middle of the Fujian coast in Southeast China. The total area of the irrigated plain is 464 sq. km., making it the third largest coastal plain in Fujian. According to geological investigations, the Putian plain was originally under some 30 meters of seawater. The original coastline was formed by the Nangshan mountain to the north, the Jiuhua and Guishan mountains to the west, and the Hugong and Wuhou mountains to the south, all of which together formed a C shaped coastline. The Mulan river, which originates in the higher mountains of central Fujian, and the Yanshou and Qiulu rivers, wind their ways into the Putian plain from the north and the west, and then flow into the sea. Over centuries leading up to the Tang dynasty, these rivers had deposited silt which was pushed into a thin but fertile crescent-shaped alluvial plain by the actions of the sea. Putian is first mentioned in historical sources in 564, when the region was known as Pukou “蒲口”, implying the mouth of a river covered with abundant reeds. Another early name for the region was “蒲田” or “plain of reeds”. In the Tang, the name was simplified to Putian, eliminating the reference to water plants.

From Chen Guangda 2 (568) to Sui Kaihuang 9 (589), the administrative center of Putian was twice established, but each time it was allowed to collapse. In Tang Wude 6 (623), once more Putian district was divided off from Nanan district of Qingyuan 清源 commandery. This new administrative region closely matches the current shape of the greater Putian area. Subsequently, this region was further subdivided into Putian district, Xianyou district, and Xinghua district. In

¹ This is a translation of Zheng Zhenman, Putian pingyuan de zongzu yu zongjiao: yi beiming wei zhongxin de jieshi “莆田平原的宗族與宗教: 以碑銘為中心的解釋 (Lineage and religion on the Putian plain: an explanation centered on stone inscriptions), *歷史人類學學刊 Lishi renleixue xuekan (History and Anthropology)* 4.1 (2003): 1–49.

the Northern Song Taiping Xingguo 5 (980) the three districts were combined into one Xinghua Commandery. In Ming Zhengtong 13 (1448) Xinghua district was abolished and its land was distributed to Xianyou and Putian districts. At that time all the coastal plain was given to Putian district.² In the 1980's the Putian plain reached into ten townships, namely Chengjiao 城郊, Huating 華亭, Xitianwei 西天尾, Wutang 梧塘, Hanjiang 涵江, Jiangkou 江口, Huangshi 黃石, Quqiao 渠橋, Beigao 北高, and Hushi 筏石, with an overall population of over 500, 000 people at that time.³

The large-scale reclamation of the land of the Putian coastal plain began in the mid-Tang period, and had been largely completed by the early Ming. This process involved the establishment of irrigation systems and the reclaiming of piece after piece of land from the sea. The construction of the irrigation systems was the most important factor in this development. The history of the irrigation of the Putian plain can be divided into three main phases: 1) from the mid-Tang to the Five Dynasties during which time the main goal was the digging of reservoirs to store fresh water; 2) from the Northern Song to the Southern Song, characterized by the construction of weirs and the digging of irrigation canals; and 3) from the Yuan to the mid-Ming, with the elaboration of the system of irrigation canals and secondary channels and the expansion and continual construction of sea dikes. Through a long process of the construction of irrigation and the reclamation of land from the sea, three large and relatively independent irrigation systems were developed. These are the Nanyang (Southern irrigated plain) with the Mulan weir 木蘭陂 at its origin, the Beiyang Northern irrigated plain 北洋 with the Yanshou weir 延壽陂, the Taiping weir 太平陂, and the Shihua weir 使華陂 at its multiple starting points, and the Jiuliyang 九里洋, with the Nan'an weir 南安陂 at its origin.⁴

² See the Qianlong edition of the *Putian xianzhi* 《莆田縣志》, j.1 *Yudizhi* 輿地志, reprinted in Guangxu 5 (1879) 1–5.

³ See the Putian Toponym Committee 莆田縣地名辦公室編 ed., *Putian diminglu* (*Putian register of place names*) 莆田地名錄, 1982. 9, 16, 23, 33, 41, 47, 57, 65, 73, 163, 173.

⁴ See Li Tingshui 林汀水: "Cong dixue guandian kan Putian pingyuan de kaifa (From a geographical perspective looking at the development of the Putian plain 從地理學觀點看莆田平原的開發" in *Zhongguo shehui jingjishi yanjiu* (*Journal of Chinese socio-economic history*) 中國社會經濟史研究, 1986.2; see also Morita Akira 森田明. 1962. "Fukkenshō ni okeru suiri kyōdōtai ni tsuite" 福建省における水利共同體について", in *Rekishigaku kenkyū* 歷史學研究 (*Historical Research*), Vol. 261:19–28.

The shape and distribution of villages in the Putian coastal area is closely linked to the development of the irrigation systems. Settlements in the area prior to the Song were mostly along the edges of the coastal plain in protected mountain valleys and low lying hills, especially those close to sources of fresh water such as valley streams and coastal reservoirs. Because large scale irrigation had not been developed, these settlements were widely scattered, and there must have been many boat people living off fishing along the coast.⁵ Over the Song and Yuan dynasties, following the gradual expansion of the great irrigation systems, settlements spread into the center of the plain and along the coast. These newly established settlements usually had corresponding irrigation canals and protective dikes, therefore many of them have the words “塘 tang (reservoir)”, “埭 dai (dike)”, or “墩 dun (mound)” as part of their names. During the Ming and Qing, new mudflats (*dai-tian*) were constantly being reclaimed from the sea beyond the sea-walls, so that we find the expressions “first dike”, “second dike” and “third dike”. The number of coastal villages in these newly reclaimed zones continued to expand. By the late Qing, the Mulan irrigation system of the Southern plain provided water to 102 villages, while the Yanshou irrigation system of the Northern plain serviced 172 villages, while the Taiping irrigation system watered 28 villages, and the Shihua weir system irrigated 29 villages.⁶

In the history of the development of Putian, lineages and religious organizations have played major roles. After the Yanshou Weir and its main irrigation canals were established in the Northern Plain in the mid Tang (780–783), several large lineage groups each began separately to reclaim patches of land from the sea, establishing various independent reservoirs and dikes, such as the Lindai dike 林埭, the Yetang reservoir 葉塘, the Lintang reservoir 林塘, the Wangtang reservoir 王塘, the minor Lintang reservoir 小林塘, the Chentang reservoir 陳塘, the Fangdai dike 方埭, the Weitang reservoir, 魏塘, the Chendai dike 陳埭, the Sutang reservoir 蘇塘, the Youtang reservoir 游塘, and the

⁵ According to the Hongzhi *Xinghua fuzhi* 興化府志 and the Qianlong *Putian xianzhi* 莆田縣志 in the Ming there were three *Hebosuo* 河泊所 (Fishery Tax Stations) established in Putian, which each year took in 2,500 piculs of “fishery rice tax” “魚課米”.

⁶ See Chen Chiyang 陳池養, *Putian shuilizhi* (Putian irrigation gazetteer) 莆田水利志, j.2. *Beitang* (Weirs and reservoirs) 破塘. NB: These late Qing totals of 102 and 229 villages can be compared to current figures of 297 for the Southern Plain and 435 for the Northern plain.

Zhengdai dike 鄭埭. Amongst these there were several monastic estates reclaiming stretches of land such as the Guohuan monastic estate 國懽院田, the Cishou monastic estate 慈壽院田, and the Shangsheng monastic estate 上生院田. At the time of the construction of the Mulan weir in the Southern Irrigated plain in 1068–1077, the three Yu 三余 the seven Zhu 七朱, the Lin 林, Chen 陳, Wu 吳 and the Gu 顧—who made up the “Fourteen Surnames” 十四大家, donated funds and labor, as well as land for the digging of canals. Afterwards, these Fourteen Surnames, or as they were also referred to, the Meritorious Ministers, for a long time controlled the irrigation system, and became the most influential social group in the area. When the Taiping Weir was built in the Northern Irrigated plain in 1056–1063, it was first managed by the Eight Great Surnames, but later it was taken over by the Buddhist monks of Nangshan Monastery. The date of construction of the Shihua Weir in the Northern irrigated plain is unclear, but from the early Ming the irrigation system was under the control of the Fang lineage. The Nanan Weir was constructed in 977, but in the Southern Song and the Ming it was controlled in succession by the Fang, the Huang and the Wang lineages, who managed its reconstruction. The coastal areas of the Jiuliyang irrigated plain were also reclaimed by various lineages independently, as can be seen by the names of villages and reclaimed land in that region such as Wudun Mound 吳墩, You-dun Mound 游墩, Chen mound 陳墩, Oudai dike 歐埭, Hedai dike 何埭, Zhuodai dike 卓埭, and Eastern Caidai dike 東蔡埭.⁷

The historical evolution of irrigation systems, the environmental constraints on settlements, and the modes of lineage and religious organization all had determining influences on the construction of the space of activity of local Putian society. Due to limitations of space, this introduction will not attempt a deep analysis of the inner connections of these different social spaces, but it should be emphasized that the evolution of lineage forms and religious organizations in the Putian plains were controlled to a large degree by the development of the irrigation system and the physical environment of the local settlements. Therefore, when conducting comparative studies in regional history, considerable importance should be given to physical geography and environmental dimensions of social life.

⁷ Chen Chiyang 陳池養, *Putian shuilizhi* 莆田水利志, j. 2, 3: Weirs and Reservoirs陂塘.

Buddhism and powerful lineages in the early period

The spread of Buddhism into the Putian region can be traced back to the Southern Dynasties. It is claimed that in the period between the Liang and the Chen dynasties, when the Confucian scholar Zheng Lu 鄭露 built a study called the Nanhu Thatched Hut 南湖草堂 at the base of the Phoenix mountain 鳳凰山, a spirit being requested that he bequeath the land to found a Buddhist monastery. Subsequently in 558 the Thatched Hut was changed into the Hall of the Golden Immortal 金仙院, becoming the first Buddhist site in recorded Putian history. In 589 the Hall became the Golden Immortal Monastery 金仙院寺 and in 711 it received an imperial plaque changing its name to Lingyan (Numinous Peak) 靈巖. In the Song Taiping Xingguo reign period (976–984), it was imperially honored with a new name, Guanghua 廣化 (Broad Transformation), which it has kept to this day. From the Southern Dynasties to the end of the Tang, several other renowned Buddhist monasteries were built in Putian coastal region, including the Baoshenyuan on Hugong mountain 壺公山寶勝院, the Wan'an Shuiluyuan 萬安水陸院, the Baorui Lingguangsi 保瑞靈光寺, the Yujian Huayansi 玉潤華嚴寺, the Guiyang Linggan chanyuan 龜山靈感禪院, the Nangshan Cishousi 囊山慈壽寺, the Zhongheyuan on Hugong Mountain 壺公山中和院, the Shangshensi in Hanjiang 涵江上生寺, the Shengshouyuan in Jiangkou 江口聖壽院, the Zhaofuyuan on Taiping mountain 太平山招福院. Tang Buddhist culture was very advanced in Putian as seen in the lives and writings of accomplished monks such as Wuji 無際, Zhiyan 志彥, Fatong 法通, Wuliao 無了, Miaoying 妙應, and Benji of Caoshan 曹山本寂. Of these, Zhiyan was summoned to court to lecture on the *Sifenlü* 四分律, Wuliao became a “flesh Buddha” 肉身佛, Miaoying was known as both a god and a Buddha 神僧 and Benji 本寂 is known as the second patriarch of the Caotong branch of Chan Buddhism 曹洞宗二祖, although he was in fact its founder.⁸

When Tang Wuzong 唐武宗 in 845 “memorialized calling for the destruction of all Buddhist monasteries, and for the reversion to secular, commoner life of all the monks and nuns” the Buddhist monasteries and minor halls of Putian were destroyed, and monks and nuns

⁸ See Putian Religious Affairs Bureau, ed *Putian zongjiaozhi caogao* (Putian County Religious Draft Gazetteer) 莆田宗教志初稿, mimeograph edition, 1991.

fled.⁹ When in the following years Tang Xuanzong 唐宣宗 ordered the restoration of Buddhism, the monasteries of Putian were rebuilt and continued, flourishing until the end of the Tang. During the Five Dynasties, Wang Shenzhi promoted Buddhism, enabling Buddhist monastic estates in Fujian to expand exponentially, and Putian was no exception. The Song scholar Li Junfu 李俊甫 in his *Puyang bishi* 莆陽比事 stated: “Wang Yanjun of the Min upheld the Buddhist law, and in a single year ordained 20, 000 monks. The great lineages of Putian competed to donate funds and property and build over 500 Buddhist monasteries”.¹⁰ The *Ming Hongzhi Xinghua Fuzhi* 興化府志 records that in the Southern Song there were 246 Buddhist establishments in Putian, and that their annual production for taxes came to 925 guan 貫 662 文. According to the *Putianzhi*, edited in 1190–1194, the Nanshan Guanghuasi 南山廣化寺 at its peak had over ten monastic estates, with over 120 an (smaller shrines or nunneries). “別為院者十，為庵者百有二十”。 At this same time, on the “eight sides of Hugong mountain, there were formerly eighteen monasteries and thirty-six cliffside retreats”.¹¹ Because these Buddhist monasteries had enormous power, their influence on local finance was huge. Liu Kezhuang 劉克莊 commented in his *Da Xiangshou Pan Guanjiang* 答鄉守潘官講 that:

I have carefully observed that the budgets of Putian and Fuzhou commandaries depend entirely on the Buddhist monasteries, and base their expenditures on the amounts they raise in taxes (from these monasteries). In Fuzhou these funds are called “shifeng”, and in Putian they are called “zhujun (aiding the army)”. Therefore good monks no longer are willing to live in the monasteries, and only those with begging bowls and no sense of shame put their names forward as abbots.

某竊見莆、福郡計，全仰僧刹，率以獻納多寡定去留。福謂之‘實封’，
莆謂之‘助軍’。故好僧不肯住院，惟有衣鉢無廉耻者方投名求售。¹²

By the end of the Southern Song, when financial pressure became too great, the monastic estates went into bankruptcy. Liu Kezhuang pointed out:

⁹ Huang Tao 黃滔: 龜洋靈感禪院東塔和尚碑銘, 華巖寺開山始祖碑銘, and 瀑山靈巖寺碑銘, in K. Dean and Zheng Zhenman, *Epigraphical Materials on the History of Religion: Xinghua Region* 興化府分冊, Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1995, No. 3–5, pp. 2–6.

¹⁰ Li Junfu 李俊甫 *Puyang bishi* 莆陽比事, j.1, pp. 2–3.

¹¹ Qianlong *Putianxianzhi* 莆田縣志, j.4 建置, 志·寺觀, pp. 35–43.

¹² Liu Kezhuang 劉克莊, *Houcun xiansheng daquanji* 後村先生大全集, j. 134, p. 1380.

In recent years the amounts taken from the monks has grown even greater, so that nine monasteries out of ten are in ruins. Taxes in the many hundreds of thousands flow into the hands of the powerful, while monasteries are left without tiles on their roofs—this is something that did not occur in earlier generations.

近歲取諸僧者愈甚，十刹九廢。有歲收數千百斛盡入豪右，而寺無片瓦者，則前世之所未有也。¹³

Most of the great lineages in Putian during the Tang and Song depended on one or another Buddhist monastery. This was because it was forbidden in the Tang and Song to worship one's ancestors beyond the fourth generation, and the major lineages, in order to worship their ancestors and sacrifice at their graves, often established a Patron's Shrine within a Buddhist monastery, or built a smaller Buddhist temple or shrine next to their ancestor's tombs. Within the Nanshan Guanghuasi and its subsidiary temples and nunneries many of the great lineages set up Gongdeyuan 功德院 Shrines in Honor of the Merit (of their ancestors) or Baogongci 報功祠 Shrines to Repay the Merit (of the ancestors). These included the Nanhu Zheng lineage hall 南湖鄭氏祠堂 on the right side of the Guanghuasi Fatang hall 廣化寺法堂, the Fang ancestral shrine in the Jianfu Monastery 薦福院方氏祠堂, the Huang Tao Shrine 黃祠堂 in the Zhongzangan 中藏庵 and the Pumenan 普門庵, the Lin Zan Shrine in the Baogongan 報功庵林攢祠堂, as well as the Gong lineage hall of Merit within the Chongxian Wenshu Monastery 崇先文殊院龔氏功德院.¹⁴ In order to support these *citang* (shrines dedicated to ancestors) and to carry out sacrifices and worship, each of the major lineages supported the Buddhist monasteries with regular donations of land and rents. This was probably the principal source of income of these monasteries at the time. For example, the Five dynasties *Guanghuasi tanyuezhu Zhengshi shetian beiji* 廣化寺檀越鄭氏舍田碑記 states:¹⁵

In 909, (we) the Patrons, Commander in Chief and Administrator Zheng Yun and his brother Vice Commander of Xinan Zheng Zhen,

¹³ Liu Kezhuang 劉克莊, *Houcun xiansheng daquanji* 後村先生大全集, j. 175, 詩話. p. 1563.

¹⁴ Zhang Qin 張琴, *Putianxian Guanghuasizhi* 莆田縣廣化寺志, j. 1.

¹⁵ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials on the History of Religion in Fujian: Xinghua Region* 興化府分冊, Fuzhou: Fujian renmin chubanshe, 1995: No. 6, pp. 6–7. [See also the extensive discussion of the Zheng lineage relationship to the Guanghuasi Monastery of Broad Transformation in Clark (2007): 265–270.]

took a strip of land around a small reservoir in Pinglingli sub-canton that our (deceased) father, Arbiter Lord Gao¹⁶ had purchased from Chen Erniang, (and which produced) an income of 900 strings of cash, and donated it to Lingyan Guanghuasi Monastery, in order to maintain forever the bright lamps, and to earnestly revere our father the Arbiter, and his spouse Lady Chen. Moreover, while our father the Arbiter was alive he already had taken over sixty strips of land from above and below the reservoir and donated them to this monastery, to set up fasts and offerings for Lord (Zheng) Lu, the Chamberlain for the Palace Revenues, Leader of Court Gentleman Lord (Zheng) Zhuang, and Mounted Escort Lord (Zheng) Shu. Their names were added to the revered dates (for sacrifices). Rents paid (on these lands) are collected from the tenant farmers and the taxes are taken in by the shrine. We also requested permission to erect stelae on the side of the Daxiongao Hall and in the *yingtang* (lit. image hall, or memorial hall). The monks of the monastery are to venerate (the stelae), and they are not to be lost.

Reverently recorded by the Patrons Zheng Yun and Zheng Zhen in Qianhua 2 (912).

梁開平三年，檀越主都督長史鄭筠偕弟信安郡司馬鄭震，抽出考廷評
皋公在日置買得陳二娘平陵里小塘甌壟田一派，產錢九百貫，舍入靈
巖廣化寺，充長明燈，追薦祖廷評府君、妣夫人陳氏兼考廷評在日，
曾抽塘坂上下田六十餘段，舍入本寺，為露公太府卿、莊公中郎將、
淑公別駕，名充忌辰，修設齋供，租付佃收，課貫祠納。仍請立碑於大
雄殿側及影堂之內，爾寺僧遵之，不得遺墜者。

乾化二年五月十日，檀越主鄭筠、鄭震謹志。

After this, the Zheng also set up another inscription at the monastery which reads:¹⁷

In the Song Chunhua period (990–994), the Scribe of Houdai Master (Zheng) Huan's grandmother Lady Yu constructed the various buildings of the Chongsheng Nunnery, and also donated several pieces of land from in front and behind the Southern Temple (Guanghuasi), as well as a strip of mountain forest land in front of the Pingyang tombs. These lands were given to the monks in order to pay for necessary firewood and supplies. Each year these lands produced 234 strings of cash for the nunnery. After this time, our descendants were not allowed to occupy (these lands), and the monks and nuns were not allowed to steal this property and offer it to powerful lineages. Reverently recorded.

宋淳化間，後埭長史緩公婆夫人余氏，新創崇聖庵諸刹，又舍南寺前
後等處田數段，及平洋墓前山林一派，付與僧充柴薪之用，遞年計該

¹⁶ [The title Tingping or Tingweiping, was used until the 6th century, thus its use here appears honorific.]

¹⁷ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 7, p. 7.

產錢二百三十四貫。入庵而後，子孫不許侵漁，寺僧亦不許盜獻豪門，謹疏。

The Chongshengan 崇聖庵 referred to here is in fact the small studio that had belonged to the Zheng brothers. The nearby twelve ancestral graves in fact had a small Buddhist shrine at the gravesite. In the *Nan-hushan Zhengshi citangji* 南湖山鄭氏祠堂記, dated Yuan Zhizheng 13 (1353) one finds:¹⁸

The Attendant Censor of Houdai Master (Zheng) Boyu's grandmother Lady Yu established a nunnery known as the Chongshengan Nunnery. She also bequeathed several pieces of land (to the nunnery). Each year on the annual days of sacrifice, and on the anniversaries of the death of the ancestors, and on the Central Prime (Zhongyuan 7/15), the monks and nuns would prepare ritual offerings, the descendants would visit and worship, and the funds taken in as per contract would not be changed.

後壻侍御史伯玉公祖母余氏創庵，即崇聖庵，又割田若干段。每遇歲時享祀、祖忌、中元，釋氏備禮物，子孫拜謁，款納如約不替。

These graveside shrines established specifically for the worship of ancestors and the protection of their graves were under the strict control of the lineage, and were in fact a form of lineage property. At the end of the Southern Song, due to the continuous decline of the Buddhist monastic economy, the great lineages began to directly enter into and manage the affairs of the monasteries, causing the monasteries to become even more dependent on them. The *Jianfuyuan Fangshi citangji* 薦福院方氏祠堂記 (Jianfu Monastery Fang lineage ancestral shrine record) of Chunhua 1 (1265) encapsulates the evolving relationship between the great lineages of Putian and the Buddhist monasteries:¹⁹

(The founding Putian ancestor of the Fang) Senior Official (Fang Tingfan) desired to build a *jingshê* (spirit hall) to worship his ancestors and unite his kin, but he was unable to do this. His six sons, Vice Director of the Bureau of Waterways and Irrigation (Fang) Renyi, Vice Director of the Palace Library (Fang) Renyue, Editorial Director (Fang) Renrui, Court of Judicial Review Rectifier (Fang) Renxun, Director of the Headquarters Bureau of the Bureau of Rites (Fang) Renzai, and Proofreader (Fang) Renyuan, united their efforts to realize their father's plan. They requested empty land from officials and purchased a plot of land belonging to a

¹⁸ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 66, pp. 73–74.

¹⁹ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 44, pp. 48–50. [This text by Liu Kezhuang is discussed in Clark (2007): 268].

Director of Studies (?) within the Southern Monastery (Guanghuasi) to increase (their holdings). Thereupon the Jianfu Yuan (Monastery) had its start. Then they together donated thirty piculs (measure of grain produced) of Baoshi farmlands. In addition, the Vice Director of the Palace Library (Fang Renyue) gave seven piculs worth of land from Nanji, and three piculs worth of land from Nanmen. The Proofreader (Fang Renyuan) donated three piculs worth of land from Shiji. Vice Director of the Headquarters Bureau (Fang Renzai) donated ten piculs worth of land from Haopu. Their Buddhist relative (?) Zhushan Youlin added in six piculs worth of land from Jingxiang and Hengzheng, and some additional fragments came from there. These lands in total yielded 59 piculs valued at seven strings and 256 cash (7,256 cash). With this the Jianfu (Monastery) first had its lands. This can be seen in the record written by the Prefect of Putian, Lü Chengyou. Formerly, one made offerings to the three generations of the Senior Scribe, the Vice Censor in Chief, and the Senior Official (Fang Tingfan) as well as the founders of the six branches of the lineage in the Dharma Hall. On the anniversaries of the deaths of the Vice Censor in Chief and his wife, and those of the Senior Official and his two wives, prayers were recited for their deliverance (*zhuiyan*). On the Middle Prime *Lanpen pudu* ritual there was a collective worship of the ancestors, and the descendants of the six branch ancestors would each come to express their reverence, so there were gathered together several thousand people. From the founding of the (Jianfu) Monastery over three hundred years have passed, but the incense has been lit as though it were only a single day. Later the monastery became slightly run down, and the Lord (Fang) Baomo and Lord (Fang) Zhonghui in succession supported (the monastery) and it flourished once more. By 1260, the monastery was impoverished and the buildings were old, the land tax was urgently demanded and the debt was heavy. The abbot Baoxun could not calculate any way out, and so he considered shifting the blame and fleeing. Lord (Fang) Zhonghui's son, (Fang) Sicheng regretted that the seven generations of ancestors would no longer receive sacrifices, so he generously took from his private funds to pay off the officials and cancel the debt. After managing affairs for two years, making gradual progress, he renewed the gateways, passageways and halls (of the monastery). Then he led his entire lineage in announcing to the (Xinghua) Commandery that "The Commandery has for a long time planned for its own income through its supervision of Buddhist temples. The new abbot of the monastery collects the military aide tax in full, and every ten years he is replaced and the new abbot continues on in the same way. The officials ask how much should go towards military aide, but they never ask whether the monks are corrupt or pure. How then can monasteries not collapse? We request that this monastery be ordered to collect one tenth of the monastic military aide tax each year, and that this amount be paid to the officials on an annual basis (at the start of the year). The abbot should be chosen by the higher officials of my lineage." He also stated: Monasteries are built up and flourish through renovations, they decline

through expenditures (on taxes). Currently, with the exception of the great anniversaries of the saints, the twice annual taxes, the *mianding* military tax, the *cuxi* commercial tax, the *kengzhi* mining and smelting tax, the rice and wheat surcharges, the *chuanjia* tax of boats and armor for the military, the *lingmao* arrow tax, and the ritual tax all must be remitted according to ancient precedent. However, as for all these kinds of unnecessary additional expenses, such as the demands of the Palace Construction Office, and the costs of paying back the Buddhist Superiors for traveling together to examine the monks (?), government agencies give very help little (to cover these expenses), but the smaller Buddhist monasteries are burdened without end. We request that all of these fees be eliminated." The Commandery agreed with all of these requests, and passed the report on to the relevant sections of the Ministry of Rites. The Ministry of Rites also accepted the recommendations and sent down orders to commandery and district levels. Thereupon it was announced to the extended lineage that "Nanshan (Guanghua) Monastery is a ritual space for the reverencing of the saints. In the days of leisure at the end of the year, the men with official titles (*mingshi*) of the lineage formed ranks within the Buddha Halls but they did not visit the shrine (of their ancestors). From now on, after assisting with the incense (in the Buddhist halls) everyone should also worship in the ancestral shrine to show respect for the good fortune (of the lineage). The Monastery will provide wine and food, as well as providing labor and services. Also, the Lingyin Jinzi tombs formerly restricted incense offerings based on the incomes from sacrificial lands. *Mingshi* (Officials of rank), *Juren* (Provincial Graduates), and *Jianxuesheng* (District Students) mostly did not prepare sacrifices. From now on they should all pay visits to the tombs, and the Monastery will provide wine and food. We invite all to sweep the tombs, but those who have been assigned to office in the capital are exempted from the division of the sacrificial meat." The members of the lineage expressed their views, stating, "It would be appropriate to write this into a regulatory contract, as we desire that it be maintained for generations to come."

[方氏入莆始祖]長官嘗欲營精舍以奉先合族而未果，六子水部員外郎仁逸、秘書少監仁岳、著作郎仁瑞、大理司直仁遜、禮部郎中仁載、正字仁遠，協力以成父志，請隙地於官，買南寺某司業圃以益之，於是薦福始有院。既共施寶石全莊田三十石種，又施南箕田七石種、南門田三石種，秘監也；施漈上田三石種，正字也；施濠浦田十石種，禮部也；增景祥橫圳田六石種，僧祖叔住山有麟也；計種五十九石，產錢七貫二百六十五文，於是薦福始有田。見於莆田令尹呂承佑之記。舊祠長史、中丞、長官三世及六房始祖於法堂，遇中丞祖妣、長官祖二妣忌則追嚴，中元孟蘭則合祭，六房之後各來瞻敬，集者幾千人。自創院逾三百年，香火如一日，後稍衰落，賴寶謨公、忠惠公後先扶持而復振。至景定庚申，院貧屋老，賦急債重，主僧寶熏計無所出，將委之而逃。忠惠子寺丞君憫七祖垂垂廢祀，慨然出私錢輸官平債，經理两年，銖寸累積，一新門廡殿堂。迺帥宗族白於郡曰：“郡計取辦僧刹久矣。新

住持納助軍錢十分，滿十年換帖者亦如之。間助軍多寡，未嘗問僧汙潔，刹烏得不壞？願令本院歲納助軍一分，歲首輸官，主僧許本宗官高者選舉。”又曰：“院以葺理而興，以科敷而廢。今後除聖節大禮、二稅、免丁、醋息、坑治、米麵、船甲、翎毛、知通儀從悉從古例輸送，惟諸色泛敷，如修造司需求、賠補僧正偕腳試案等，官司所濟無幾，小院被累無窮，並乞蠲免。”郡照所陳給據，仍申漕臺、禮部，禮部從申，符下郡縣。迺念於廣族曰：“南山，祝聖道場也。歲滿散日，族之命士有隨班佛殿而不詣祠堂者，自今祝香畢，並拜祠飲福，院辦麵飯，並勞僕夫。又靈隱金紫墓，昔拘蒸嘗分數，命士、舉人、監學生多不預祭。自今省謁，院辦酒食，請眾拜掃，內赴官入京者免分胙。”眾議曰：“宜着為規約，願世守之。”

The six brothers of the Fang lineage's second generation were “all officials in the Kingdom of Min”. This shows that the Jianfu Monastery was built during the Five Dynasties. During the Song the Fang were one of the top ranking lineages in Putian, and the Jianfu monastery, with their support, flourished for many years. For these reasons, from the Five Dynasties until the end of the Southern Song, the Fang lineage used the Jianfu Monastery as the site of their collective ancestral worship, a relationship that lasted for over 300 years of “incense offering that seemed to last but a day.” However, the increasing tax burden on the Buddhist monasteries at the end of the Southern Song caused the Jianfu Monastery to near bankruptcy, and it became totally reliant upon the aid and supervision of the Fang lineage, thus gradually losing its independence. After this, because of the moving away of the Fang lineage hall, the Nanshan Jianfu monastery no longer existed. In the Ming Wanli (1573–1620) inscription entitled *Chongjian Nanshan Jianfuci beiji (Stele record of the restoration of the Jianfu shrine on Nanshan)* 重建南山薦福祠碑記 we read:²⁰

According to my research, my ancestors entered Putian over a thousand years ago (lit. sacrificial cycles), and this shrine also has endured for over 800 years. Perusing the records of this commandery, as for those Buddhist monasteries that contain (ancestral) shrines commemorating local elders, the shrines mostly arose on account of the monastery (i.e., got their names from the monasteries in which they were established). Only the Jianfu (Buddhist Monastery) to the west of Nanshan (Guanhuasi) got its name from the ancestral shrine of my ancestors.... The victorious dynasty's soldiers burnt down the monastery, and only ruins were left. In 1376 the Zhuiyuantang (Pursuit of Origins Hall) was moved and rebuilt in the lane of an old crabapple tree. This area then became a

²⁰ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 179, pp. 204–206.

weedy patch of grass. The Supervising Censor Lord Wanyou edited the lineage genealogy, once expressed his melancholy over this situation. In Wanli *gengxu* (1610) the sacrificial lands were investigated, and a strong effort was made to locate the old foundations... Thereupon materials were gathered and work begun, with construction commencing in the winter of *xuyin* (1639) and the hall was completed in the autumn of *xinsi* (1641)... We worried that materials and effort would not be adequate, so we did not plan to immediately restore the former aspect of the monastery.

考吾宗入莆千祀，而是祠亦八百餘年矣。載觀郡中梵刹之有鄉先生祠，多緣寺而起，獨南山迤西之薦福，則因吾祠而名。…勝國兵燹，淳耀板蕩。皇朝洪武丙子，移建追遠堂於古棠巷中，此地浸鞠萊草蕪。給諫萬有公叙譜，曾致慨之。尚祖際萬歷庚戌，偏覆圭田，力清出故址。…於是飭材鳩工，徵役於戊寅冬，告成於辛巳秋。…虞物力之未副，不圖頓還舊觀。

In the eyes of the Fang lineage of the Ming period, it would seem that the Jianfu monastery had been built originally exclusively in order to serve as the lineage hall of the Fang. Thus after the moving away of the Fang ancestral hall in the Ming, there was no longer any reason for the continued existence of the Jianfu Monastery. Even though a Fang lineage ancestral hall was built on this site in the Ming Wanli period, there was “no plan to restore the original aspect” of the site. In other words, the lineage hall had by then entirely replaced the Buddhist monastery.

During the Ming Qing period, there were still some Putian lineages who maintained ancestral halls within Buddhist monasteries but these halls were usually separately managed by the lineages themselves, so that the relations between monasteries and lineages had completely reversed itself. For example, the *Yanshou Xu lineage genealogy* 延壽徐氏族譜 compiled at the end of the Qing states:

The Jingxiang shrine is to the northwest of the Prefectural city (of Putian)... close by the old ancestral residence in the Yanshou area. In the Tang Lord Zhongmi donated funds to construct the Jingxiang Monastery, and donated over seven *qing* of land to cover the costs of incense and lamps. By the Song, Lord Duo, the Dakui (first place) Prime Minister once more restored the monastery and donated an additional two *qing* of land. The monks were moved by his virtue, and built a shrine to worship the two lords as Patrons. The temple plaque read “The shrine of the Two First Place Candidates from the Tang and the Song”. Following this, imperially honored Lord Chaofeng, whose name was Zhefu, and Lord Chongyi, whose name was Kezhen, each in succession repaired the shrine... At the beginning of the Qing, the shrine had once again col-

lapsed, and the monastery monks built up a simple earthen walled structure, in which the images of the former ancestors were placed on the second floor. In Kangxi *dingyou* (1717), Gentleman Lord Wan'an of the Xianxi branch, together with the Putian lineage members Chengzhang, Feiying, and Lianghan tore down the earthen structure and urged the entire lineage to rebuild. In Qianlong *gengchen* (1760), in the autumn, the Xianxi branch paid a visit to the shrine, and found it narrow and small, and so with (the help of) the nephews Daren, Daye, Darui, and Dayuan, they added on a back hall to the shrine... They also recalled that the monastery had first been built by their founding ancestor, but that over time it had collapsed. So they contributed funds and rebuilt the monastery anew.

景祥祠，在郡城西北，…密邇故居延壽地。唐中秘公捐資創景祥寺，仍舍田七餘頃，以充香燈需。至宋，大魁尚書鐸公複整本寺，增租二頃。僧德之，立祠祀二公為檀越主，榜曰“唐宋二狀元祠”。嗣是，朝奉公哲甫、崇儀公可珍疊加修葺。…國朝初年，本祠復圮，寺僧潛築土樓，只存先影於樓上。康熙丁酉歲，仙溪房朝議大夫萬安公與甫諸生成章、蜚英、良翰輩，削平寨樓，倡族復重建之。乾隆庚辰秋，仙溪臨謁本祠，見規模狹隘，與侄大任、大業、大瑞、大源添蓋本祠後座。…又念本寺為世祖創建之地，日久傾頽，因為之捐資鼎建重新云。²¹

Even though both the Jingxiang Monastery and the Jingxiang ancestral hall both exist, nevertheless the Xu lineage strictly conceived of themselves as the owners of the establishment, and the monks are only the employees of the Xu lineage. This kind of inversion of guest into host can be seen in incipient form already in the Song to Yuan transitional period. In the *Chongxiu Jingxiang xushi citangji* (*Record of the restoration of the Jingxiang Xu lineage ancestral hall*) 重修景祥徐氏祠堂記 of 1346, the author proclaims:

According to my research, families having a temple and sacrifices having lands (to pay for them) is an ancient rule. In recent generations, the great households have bequeathed lands to create monasteries, putting themselves in charge of the shrine to the patrons. Although this is not an ancient rule, nevertheless it began as a way of repaying (the debt to) one's origins (one's ancestors) so that they would shine on and not be forgotten, thus this is one (with the ancient ways)... In the Song, taxes were taken from the monasteries, and the Jingxiang (hall) was not maintained. Only the Buddha hall and the shrine to (Xu Yin 徐寅) were maintained. In the Xianchun period (998–1003) Sigan (Director of Shields, an archaic title) Lord Duanheng requested that the Com-

²¹ (Qing) Xu Lin ed., (清) 徐臨修, *Yanshou Xushi zupu* 延壽徐氏族譜 (*Yanshou Xu lineage genealogy*), j. 23, *Jianzhi* (*Edifices*) 建置, 1762 edition, pp. 2–3.

mandery allow him to take in the rent on the gardens and to use them as the occasion required. Before long, the Buddhist monk Yuangui did not take proper care of the incense offerings, and claimed the mountain around the tombs as his own property. The high official Imperially enfeoffed Lord (Xu) Jifu took the (land) certificate as proof, and then the matter was cleared up. After this the Buddhist Hall collapsed, and only the Dharma hall and the shrine (to Xu Yin) were left. The males of my preceding generation, and those of my own generation, from within my lineage branch, all felt a great sense of loss, stating that the family fabric was very ancient, and that it would be appropriate to renew the family temple. They considered the fact that our lineage has many descendants, and that sacrificial lands must not be too plain. Thereupon the ancestral portraits were repainted, and new sacrificial lands were established, so that the great accomplishments of our ancestors over hundreds of years could again be seen in this day and age. Is this not magnificent?²²

余考，家有廟，祭有田，古制也。近世巨室舍田創寺，主檀越祠，制雖非古，然報本始，昭不忘，一也。…宋季科徵取給於寺，景祥遂爾不支，惟佛殿、公祠獨存。咸淳時，司幹端衡公請於郡，允抽園租，充時思用。未幾，被僧元規罔恤香火，以墳山為己業。高大父朝奉哲甫公執券證，乃白。繼是則殿圮矣，僅遺法堂、公祠。余本房諸父昆弟惻然於懷，謂家廟猶舊，而廟貌宜新也；念瓜瓞既綿，而祭田不容儉也。於是重繪先影，增置圭租，使祖宗數百年之盛事復見於今日，豈不偉歟？

The control exerted by the Xu lineage over the Jingxiang monastery at this period came first from a struggle over the control of property, and second from a claim to the preeminence of the Xu lineage within the Jingxiang monastery due to their actions in repairing their ancestral hall. What is significant is that in order to find a theoretical support for their actions, the Xu lineage members struggled to equate the Shrine of the Patron inside the monastery with a 家廟 (a Family Temple.) This demonstrates that the struggle between lineage and Buddhist monasteries in the Song Yuan period was at heart a struggle between Buddhism and Confucian ideas.

Historically, the Buddhist monasteries in Putian provided an official cover for the development of lineages and their practices of ancestral worship, and as a result these establishments received considerable support from the great lineages. However, after the Song, ancestral halls gradually separated themselves off from the Buddhist system, and lineages and monasteries went their separate ways.

²² [See the discussion of this inscription in Clark 2007: 278–280.]

Song Ming NeoConfucianism and Lineage Ancestral halls

The development of lineage organization after the Song has a close relationship with the transmission of Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianism. Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianism took form during the transition from the Northern to the Southern Song, and in the Southern Song Fujian was the center of transmission, and this had a profound impact on the literati of Putian. Neo-Confucian teachers such as the Putian scholar Lin Guangchao played an important role in the transmission of these ideas. Lin Guangchao, personal name Qianzhi, sobriquet Aixuan 林光朝字謙之, 號艾軒, roamed in his youth in Henan, and took as his teachers the masters of the Luo teachings. Later he returned to his home in Putian and dedicated himself to teaching, building the Hongquan (Red Stream) Academy 紅泉書院, where he is credited with establishing the Red Stream school of Neo-Confucian thought. In 1182, Putian scholars requested the construction of an Aixuan Shrine 艾軒祠堂, stating in their dedicatory inscriptions

Although Putian is but a small pile of stones, its Confucian style is especially flourishing. For forty or fifty years since the Shaoxing period (1131–1162), the scholars have known the Luo Teachings (of Cheng Yi) and have been renowned throughout the land for their cultivated attainments in the performance of righteousness. Master Lin Aixuan truly made this happen. The Master made a thorough study of the Six Classics, and on the side worked through the hundred philosophers. Early on he traveled to Shangxiang (i.e., various academies), but he recalled his kin and returned to his home village, where he opened a school and transmitted his teachings. Scholars from all directions came to study with him. Every year he taught several hundred people and those that obtained outstanding results in the examinations and rose to become prominent scholars were very numerous. The Master's way of being was to set a standard with his own conduct, to take the Way and Virtue as his chariot, and he did not only take the composition of essays and documents as his main purpose. As for his movements and rest, and his speech and response to questions, he always was led by ritual and performed righteousness. He so transformed scholars that when they would travel around the district and the city, their clothes and hat would always be in order, and they had the air of one who could do no wrong. Even if people did not recognize them, they would know that they were the students of Master Aixuan. How could it be (thought) that there was no source for this transformation of the style of the scholars of Putian?

莆雖小壘, 儒風特盛.自紹興以來四五十年, 士知洛學而以行義修飾聞於鄉里者, 艾軒林先生實作成之也.先生學通六經, 旁貫百氏.早遊上庠, 已而思親還里, 開門教授.四方之士摵衣從學者, 歲率數百人, 其取

魏科、登顯仕甚眾。先生之為人，以身為律，以道德為權輿，不專習詞章為進取計也。其出入起居、語言問對，無非率禮蹈義。士者化之，間有經行井邑，而衣冠肅然，有不可犯之色。人雖不識，望之知其為艾軒弟子也。甫之士風一變，豈無所自？²³

Lin Guangchao was succeeded by his disciples Lin Yizhi 林亦之 (sobriquet Wangshan 網山), Chen Zao 陳藻 (sobriquet Lexuan 樂軒) who in succession led the Red Stream Academy. They were also renowned Fujianese Neo-Confucian thinkers of the Southern Song. In 1244, Chen Zao's student Lin Xiyi 林希逸 requested that the Fujian Commander built a Chengshan Sanxianshengci 城山三先生祠 (Shrine to the Three Gentlemen of Chengshan), stating:

The School of the Three Masters (began) after the southern relocation (of the court to Hangzhou) (at the point when) Zhou (Dunyi) and the Cheng (brothers) had passed away and before Zhu (Xi) and Zhang (Zai) had emerged. Master Aixuan spread the (study of the) Classics and the putting into practice (of the teachings of the Classics) throughout the Southeast. He caused the many scholars to be immersed (in these teachings) and to embody the teachings in their daily practice. The realization that the Way of Heaven did not reside in philological study began with Master Aixuan. Masters Wangshan and Lexuan helped scholars to begin to suspect that the Luo School did not delight in (emphasize) writing, and that the Han Confucians had not reached to (the essence of) human nature and destiny. They caused all the scholars to merge (these approaches) together and see through (to the essence). The realization that human nature and the Way of Heaven were only to be found in written texts (of the Classics) began with Wangshan and Lexuan. Wangshan's writings were extremely similar to those of Master Aixuan, so that even the most familiar could not differentiate them. Lexuan was more grand. In their guarding of the Way, they very severely drove off heterodox views. Once they inscribed (an epitaph?) stating, "After Buddhism entered the Central Plains the sacrifices and rites were neglected. Foreign monks played music while the bereft children busied themselves (with Buddhist rites)." The people of this region were transformed. If people took the teachings of Wangshan and Lexuan and applied them to this day and age, how could what be attained be less than what Lexuan had achieved?

三先生之學，自南渡後，周、程中歇，朱、張未起，以經行倡東南，使諸生涵泳體踐，知聖賢之心不在於訓詁者，自艾軒始。疑洛學不好文詞，漢儒未達性命，使諸生融液通貫，知性與天道不在文章之外者，自網山、樂軒始。蓋網山論著酷似艾軒，雖精識不能辨，樂軒加雄放焉。其

²³ (Song) Chen Junqing (宋) 陳俊卿, "Aixuan citang ji 艾軒祠堂記", in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 26, pp. 28–29.

衛吾道、闢異端甚嚴，嘗銘某人云：“佛入中原祭禮荒，胡僧奏樂孤子忙。”里人化之，使網山、樂軒而用於世，所立豈在樂軒下哉！²⁴

As stated above, the Red Stream School played an important role in the transmission of Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucianism from elite to lower levels of society, and this school was involved in continuous innovations. Lin Guangchao's teaching took place prior to Zhu Xi, who was a contemporary of Lin's students Lin Yizhi and Chen Cao, and who all worked from common sources and saw themselves as fellow students. However, due to the emphasis placed on oral elucidation rather than on written exegesis, the Red Stream School's influence on later generations cannot compare with that of Zhu Xi. In the latter part of the Southern Song, Zhu Xi's fame grew by the day, and he had considerable influence on Putian as well. In Jiading 13 (1220), the Putian Confucian school established a Shrine to Master of Literature Zhu(Xi), and Zhu's close disciple Chen Mi 陳宓 composed the inscription:

Master (Zhu Xi) composed dozens of texts. Amongst these the ones that are most effective in teaching each age include his (edition and commentary) to the *Great Learning*, *Doctrine of the Mean with Interlinear Commentary*, the *Analects*, *Mencius with Collected Commentaries*, *Record of Things Close at Hand*, *Family Ritual*, and *Minor Teachings*. Families transmit these texts and people recite them aloud. Although Putian is a very small city, in the past it was known as the homeland of the scholars. Master (Zhu Xi) first served in office in Quanzhou, and visited Putian three times during the Chunxi period (1174–1189). There were many scholars who were attracted by his teachings and carried them onwards. Twenty-two years after Master (Zhu Xi) passed away, those of his generation still felt great remorse, while those born afterwards increasingly knew to show him their admiration. Education Official Chen Ji 陳汲 had all the above listed books reprinted as an act of kindness to later (generations) of students. He asked whether it was right that they would recite Zhu Xi's words without knowing the man? Thereupon he built a shrine (to Zhu Xi) in the Confucian School.

先生所著書數十種，而尤切於世教者曰《*大學*》、《*中庸*》章句或問》、《*語*》、《*孟*》集注》、《*近思錄*》、《*家禮*》、《*小學*》，家傳而人誦之。甫雖蕞爾邑，昔稱士鄉。先生初仕於泉，及淳熙間凡三至焉，趨風承教之士不少。先生歿廿二年矣，前輩往往凋謝，晚生益知

²⁴ (Song) Lin Xiyi (宋) 林希逸, “Xinghuajun chengshan sanxianshengciji 興化軍城山三先生祠記”, in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 44, pp. 44–46.

向慕校官陳君汲，既刊前諸書以惠後學矣，謂誦其書不知其人，可乎？於是即學宮而祠之。²⁵

At the end of the Song and the beginning of the Yuan, the development and spread of the teachings of Cheng-Zhu brought about reforms in the rites of popular ancestral sacrifice in Putian. This can be described as a process of the popularization of the theory and practice of ancestral worship.²⁶ This was because Cheng-Zhu neo-Confucianism emphasized the teaching of ritual and ritual orders, hoping by means of reforms to sacrifice and ritual to bring about “respect for one’s ancestors and the unification of the lineage” “敬宗收族”. Cheng Yi thought that “from the Emperor to the commoner, the five degrees of mourning are the same, and sacrificial practice should also be similar” “天子至於庶人，五服不異，祭亦如之.” Because of this view, he advocated the elimination of the hierarchical system of differing levels of sacrificial rites of worship of the ancestors, thereby enabling aristocrats and commoners alike to worship and sacrifice to all of their ancestors within the past five generations. He also recommended that even though both the founder of the lineage 高祖 and the regional ancestral founder 始祖 were likely to be outside the limits of the five generational rule, they should be sacrificed to once a year, in order to show respect for one’s origins.²⁷ On this basis, Zhu Xi put forward the further suggestion “when a gentleman sets up a residence, he should first erect a shrine to the east of the main chamber, and make four niches in order to worship the former ancestors”. The “ancestral shrine” he designed could be used to simultaneously worship and sacrifice to the last four generations descended from the founding ancestor. This actually extended the 小宗 (*xiaozong*) [classical minor descent line ancestral worship form] to the common people. As for sacrificing to the regional founding ancestor and other ancestors above the past four generations, Zhu Xi thought “these two sacrifices were not ritual practices of antiquity, but Yinchuan (proposed them) on account of their [intrinsic] meaningfulness, and I feel that one can therefore overstep

²⁵ (Song) Chen Mi (宋) 陳宓, “Zhuwengong ciji 朱文公祠記” Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 31, p. 34.

²⁶ Zheng Zhenman, *Family Lineage Organization and Social Change in Ming and Qing Fujian*, trans. M. Szonyi, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2001. Originally published as *Ming Qing Fujian jiazu zuzhi yu shehui bianqian* 明清福建家族組織與社會變遷, 1992: 227–241, 湖南教育出版社.

²⁷ (Song) Cheng Yi(宋) 程織, *Yinchuanji* 伊川文集.

earlier precedent. “此二祭古無此禮, 伊川以義起, 某覺得僭。” He also stated in regard to sacrificial lands established to support these ancestral shrines: “In order to exhaust one’s sense of kinship relations, one establishes graveside lands, and these are managed by the head of the lineage, in order to pay for sacrifices.” This is to say that although one could not worship the ancestors beyond the fifth generation in the ancestral shrines, one could nevertheless carry out sacrificial rites (to a wider range of ancestors) at the graveside. “親盡則以為墓田, 宗子主之, 以給祭用”²⁸ Because the sacrificial ritual reforms of Cheng Yi and Zhu Xi did not continue the classical regulations of the kings, but instead relied on the intrinsic meaningfulness (of the ritual actions) to inspire the rite, “不用王制, 以義起之”, they were thus able to break through the class barriers imposed by the Confucian classics and the court ritual regulations and to provide a theoretical basis for developments in both popular ancestral sacrifice and the lineage form itself. However, because Song Confucians placed a great deal of emphasis on the difference between Great and Minor Ancestral lines, this also had a negative effect on the development of lineage organization. Therefore, in the post Song process of the development of lineage forms there were continuous reforms and innovations with regards to ancestral worship and sacrifice.

In Song Putian there were already some Family Temples and Shrines set up exclusively for sacrificing to the ancestors, but because these were limited in the number of generations to which they could offer sacrifices, these proved difficult to continuously function and develop. In Qingyuan 2 (1196), Zhu Xi 朱熹 composed his *Tangguizhou cishi fengkaiguogong shizhongyi Huanggong citangji* 唐桂州刺史封開國公謚忠義黃公祠堂記, and stated:²⁹

In the (Tang) Minghuang period (712–756) the Guizhou Prefect, Lord of Loyalty and Righteousness (Huang) An, together with his son (Huang) Yao served as District Magistrates in Fujian. They were the first to move to Putian and settle in Huangxiang village in Hanjiang. The sixth generation descendant of the Prefect was an Editor. Together with his grandson Vice Director for Ceremonials in the Court of Imperial Sacrifices (Huang) Wenhui, they were filial at heart and very sincere. They built a

²⁸ (Song) Zhu Xi (宋)朱熹, *Zhuxi jiali* 朱子家禮, j. 1, *Tongli yulun* 通禮余論.

²⁹ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 29, pp. 30–31. [Clark 2007: 292 translates a passage and comments on this “remarkable text”. See also his concluding comments on pp. 326–318].

Family Temple, but passed away before completing it. (Huang Wenhui's) grandson (Huang) Shigui, Director of Studies in the National University, who was honored with (the prestige title of) Grand Master for Court Discussion, in 1032 ordered the construction of the hall and announced its name as the Huangshi Citang (Huang Lineage Ancestral hall). He set up sacrificial lands to provide for the costs of sacrificial rites, but passed away before this was completed. (Huang) Shigui's grandson, (Huang) Yanhui had served as Controller-general of Chaozhou. He donated his salary and renewed the hall. The hall is in front, and the mausoleum is behind it, clearly illustrating proper relationships. The ancestral tablets (zhaomu) are arranged by rank, and all is in good order. In spring and autumn sacrifices, the fragrance of the offerings rise up, and all are reverent and timely (quoting from *Book of Songs* No. 199). Thus they followed the practices of Master Sima (Guang) and the ideas concerning the Family Temple of Master Ouyang (Xiu). Thus, as for this Ancestral hall being built, the great acts of these three Gentlemen were magnificent indeed! I have had occasion to reflect on this. For ages we have been troubled by the absence of ancestral halls, and when there were ancestral halls, they would be built in one generation, and then most would disappear within the following generation. Alas! This is truly lamentable. Now as for something like the construction and maintenance of the Huang Lineage Ancestral hall over several generations, this is something that has been difficult for the *shidafu* (learned elite) families (to accomplish). Moreover (I) Zhu Xi have something else to say. When the person who builds (an ancestral hall) is our own ancestor, then how can those of later generations not think on their ancestor? Now thinking of (one's ancestor) consists in nothing other than repairing the ancestral temple (zumiao), participating in rites on the first and the fifteenth day of the month, offering seasonal foods (to the ancestors), making sacrifices on the dates of the deaths (of the ancestors). This can be called having endless progeny, with sincerity and harmoniousness transmitted forever.

[唐]明皇時，桂州刺史忠義公岸偕其子謠為閩縣令，始遷於莆涵江黃巷居焉。刺史六世孫校書郎偕其孫奉禮郎文惠，孝心克篤，爰構家廟，未既而卒。其孫世規以國子司業贈朝議大夫，於明道元年命工營建，榜曰“黃氏祠堂”，定祭田以供祀典，未備復卒。世規孫彥輝歷官潮州通判，捐俸新之。前堂後寢，煥然有倫；昭穆尊卑，秩然有序；倫祀蒸嘗，孔惠孔時；蓋有效於司馬君實、歐陽永叔氏家廟之意也。則是祠堂之所由立者，三公厥功偉哉！然嘗伏思之，世患無祠堂耳，而世之有者，創於一世，不二世淪沒者多矣。嗚呼！良可悲也。如黃氏祠堂而創續於祖孫若是，此士大夫家孫子之所難也。然熹又有說焉。創之者爾祖耳，後之人可無念爾祖乎？然念之者無他，祖廟修，朔望參，時食薦，辰忌祭；雲礪千億，敦睦相傳於不朽云。

The Huang lineage had built their “Family Temple” starting in their sixth generation (within Putian), and in their tenth generation they built an ancestral hall, which only attained its complete form in the

twelfth generation. This process lasted over six generations. Zhu Xi was deeply moved by these developments, noting that not only was it difficult at that time to build an ancestral hall, but that it was difficult to maintain such a hall long after it was built. In his comments, Zhu Xi does not provide an in depth analysis of the reasons for the ancestral hall's difficulty in maintaining stable development. He merely expresses the hope that through ancestral worship and rites of sacrifice the sense of unity of the lineage as a whole will be strengthened. In fact, the fundamental reason for the difficulty in sustaining continuous development for the Song lineage was their inability to worship ancestors beyond the fourth generation. Only by breaking through these limitations on the number of generations to whom one could sacrifice would it be possible to ensure the long term stable development of the lineage hall. What is noteworthy is that the Huang lineage ancestral hall worshipped and sacrificed to the founding Putian ancestor at twelve generations remove. This did not concur with contemporary ritual regulations, nor did it concur with the demands of the *Zhuzi jiali* 朱子家禮 (*Family Rituals of Master Zhu (Xi)*). Nevertheless, Zhu Xi does not express any concern over this point in the inscription. Earlier scholars have debated whether the *Family Ritual* was actually composed by Zhu Xi, or whether it had been substantially modified by later editors. Perhaps the view that the ancestral shrine must be restricted to the minor lineage formation was not Zhu Xi's underlying view after all?³⁰

In the Song-Yuan transition, due to the spreading influence of the *Zhuzi Jiali* 朱子家禮, the building of ancestral shrines by the scholar gentry elite became a widespread phenomenon. The late Southern Song Xianyou scholar gentry Chen Dang 陳譙 stated in his *Daoqingtangji* 道慶堂記 that: "Nowadays there are those who gather the lineage and [build] ancestral halls, establishing sacrificial lands to provide for the activities. This is done in imitation of the Master of Literature [Zhu Xi's] *Family Ritual* 今有合族祠堂，置祭田以供事者，仿文公《家禮》而行。³¹ The "gathering of the lineage and the building of ancestral halls" at this period probably included sacrifices to the distant ancestors of the lineage, and was not restricted to those ancestors within the

³⁰ Shu Jingnan 杜景南, "Zhu Xi Jiali shenwei kaobian 朱熹《家禮》真偽考辯", in *Zhu Xi Yiwenkao* 朱熹佚文考, Jiangsu guji chubanshe, 1991: p. 684.

³¹ (Qianlong) Xianyou xianzhi 乾隆仙游縣志, j. 8, Yizhaozhi 邑肇志. P. 6.

minor order of ancestral worship. The Putian Neo-Confucian scholar Huang Zhongyuan 黃仲元 wrote during the Song Yuan transition in his *Huangshi zuci sijingtang ji* (*Record of the Hall for Contemplating Reverence of the Huang lineage ancestral hall*) 黃氏族祠思敬堂記.³²

This hall is called a (memorial) shrine, and is (the same as) the family temple of antiquity, or as it was sometimes called, the Hall of Images. It is the site where the Huang lineage of Dongli carry out sacrifices in spring and autumn, and conduct their annual seasonal rites, paying their respects one after the other in order... The Hall is the former public hall in the residence of our lineage uncle, Vice Governor (Huang) taboo name Shi. I, (Huang) Zhongyuan and my brothers Zhonggu, Rixing, Zhigong, and our nephews Xianzu and Yuqian inherited it. We did not wish to divide it up into private property, but instead desired to convert it into an (ancestral) hall, to sacrifice to all those ancestors descended from the ancestor from whom our lineage began. (As for) all the descendants of Censor (Huang) taboo name Tao, and all those under Case Reviewer (Huang) Zhi who were in his greater descent line and the lesser descent lines, as well as all those who were related to him (*jibie jimi*) up, down, and across (the descent lines), their tablets were arranged in zhaomu generational order for a total of thirteen generations in all... Otherwise how could all the generational lines be respected, the agnates united, the written accounts joined together, and the collective maintenance of the ritual methods be ensured forever?

堂以祠名，即古家廟，或曰“影堂”，東里族黃氏春秋享祀、歲節序拜所也。…堂即族伯通守府君諱時之舊廳事，仲元與弟仲固、日新、直公、姪現祖與權得之，不欲分而私之，願移為堂，祠吾族祖所自出。御史公諱滔以下若而人，評事公諱陟以下大宗小宗、繼別繼繭若而人，上治、旁治、下治，序以昭穆，凡十三代。…不則何以奠世系、聯族屬、接文獻，而相與維持禮法於永年哉？

In Huang Zhongyuan's view, there was no substantive difference between ancestral halls and "Family temples" or "Image (i.e. memorial) halls". The sacrifices of the greater descent line worship form could be merged and assimilated with those of the lesser descent line worship form. His understanding and practice of the rituals of ancestral sacrifice were not limited by the notions of the *Zhuzi Jiali*. The Dongli Huang lineage were Neo-Confucian scholars for generations, and both Huang Zhongyuan and his father Huang Ji were both

³² Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 46, pp. 51–52. [See the discussion of the early Huang lineage in Clark 2007: 87–92.]

renowned Confucian scholars of Putian. The *Qianlong Putian xianzhi* 莆田縣志 records that:

Huang Ji...when young, was concentrated and serious. When he was slightly older he abandoned his studies, and was filled with a desire to search out the Way. He traveled to Huai, Zhe(jiang), searching out all the Masters of the Way. In his middle age he returned to his village. He heard that Chen Mi and Pan Bing had learned the teachings of (Master) Zhuzi (Zhu Xi) from Huang Gan, and so he took them as his teacher. Together with over ten like-minded scholars, he met in Master Chen's Yangzhi Hall where scripture exposition was held once every ten days. When Chen Mi and Pan Bing passed away, he built the Donghu Shutang together with his fellow students. He requested land from the officials, and carried out spring and autumn sacrifices. He read out the compact and gathered (scholars) for scriptural exegesis just as (had been done) during the lifetime of the two masters. Former classmates came to him asking him to make suggestions for their improvement. Even though he was a commoner, he acted as a Local Master for thirty years. The Prefect, his Assistant, and the local Erudites all augmented their ritual greetings...His writings include the *Sishu yishuo* (*Additional comments on the Four Books*) and other books. These texts were stored in his home.

黃績，…少凝重，稍長棄舉子業，慨然有求道之志。始遊淮、浙，遍參諸老。中年還里，聞陳宓、潘柄從黃幹得朱子學，遂師事之。與同志十餘人，集陳氏仰止堂，旬日一講。宓、柄卒，績與同門友築東湖書堂，請田於官，春秋祀焉。讀約、聚講如二師時，向之同門相與就正於績。故績雖布衣，為鄉先生三十年，郡守、佐、博士皆加禮焉。…所著有《四書遺說》等書，藏於家。

Huang Zhongyuan...when young, determined to read the works of Lian, Luo, Guan and Min as well as the writings of the two masters Pan and Chen passed down to him by his father Huang Ji, together with (the works of the) 242 literati of the Tang and Song. People of his times valued his literary achievements.. He obtained his *Jinshi* degree in 1271. He was appointed to the Directorate of Education but he did not take up office. After the Song dynasty had fallen... (he) expanded on his father's intentions, and was especially strict (in running) the Donghu Shrine. Although he grew old he did not decline in vigor. He died at age 82. His writings include *Sishu jianggao* (*Lecture notes on the Four Books*). His writings were preserved in his home.

黃仲元，…少刻志讀濂、洛、關、閩書及父績所傳潘、陳二師書，摻次唐宋名人文凡二百四十二家，文學為時所推重。第咸淳七年進士，歷除國子監簿，不赴。宋亡後，…推廣先志，尤嚴東湖之祠，雖老不少廢。年八十二卒，有《四書講稿》藏於家。³³

³³ (Qianlong) *Putian xianzhi* (乾隆) 莆田縣志, j. 16 *Renwuzhi: Lixue zhuan* 人物志·理學傳., pp. 16a-17a. (1968: 410-11).

We can see that the Huang father and son were both deeply versed in Neo-Confucian ideas, and were both the leaders of contemporary Putian Confucian studies. Therefore, the sacrifice to distant ancestors found amongst these Huang kinsmen was probably the common model for ancestral halls in Putian at that time.

In the early Ming, the scholar gentry of Putian all considered the Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucian thought as the orthodox form of Confucianism, but they nonetheless held very distinctive views of the rituals of sacrifice to the ancestors, and held continuous ongoing debates around the topic of regulations concerning ancestral halls. In Hongzhi (1489), the Minister of Punishments Peng Shao 彭韶 in his *Baitang Lishi chongxiu xianci bei* (*Stele on the repairs to the shrine of former (ancestors) of the Li lineage of Baitang*) 白塘李氏重修先祠碑 pointed out:³⁴

I have heard it said that ritual has more than one form and that human feelings are endless. If the descendant does not know his ancestor, that is the end of the matter. But if he knows his ancestor, how can he be casual about this (fact). Formerly, Master Cheng (Yi) once sacrificed to his founding ancestor as well as his immediate ancestors. Master Ziyang (Zhu Xi) followed him in this and wrote his *Family Rituals*. Later I suspect he was uneasy and stopped (his writing?) In the early years of the Hongwu period of Emperor Taizu (r. 1368–1398), it was permissible for officials and commoners to sacrifice to their great-grandfather, their grandfather, and their deceased father. In the Yongle reign period (1403–1424) the *Xingli dachun* was edited, and the *Family Rituals* were spread throughout the empire. Thereupon worship of the distant ancestor became the common rule. However, one could set out spirit tablets but not build a specialized (separate standing) shrine (for their worship). Nowadays, the renowned lineages of Putian mostly all have (such shrines), and in the arrangement of the generations within the ancestral niche-altars each family makes its own order. Some divide them into five niches, with their great-grandfathers, grandfathers, and those under them to left and right. Some lineages also divide them into five niches, and their descendants worship their own ancestors from the great-grandfather on down on the left and right in accordance with their lineage branches. All worship their earlier ancestors in the central niche. Others in accordance with the *Book of Rites* divide it up into four generations per niche, with the westernmost being the highest ancestor, while the early ancestor is only worshipped at the gravesite. But people question this. Old Confucian scholars of the Rites have reached the point where there is no fixed opinion. Truly if one bases everything on people's utmost feelings, it will

³⁴ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 103, pp. 116–118.

be impossible to bring (this debate) to an end, and impossible to achieve unanimity. Now the shrine in Baishuitang worships upwards of over ten generations. Based on our research into the meaning of the *Rites*, this seems to be improper. However, the kin of the lineage are so numerous and dispersed, that if we abandoned (these rites) and did not carry them out, then people would feel lost and abandoned at heart, with nothing left to tie them together. Wishing to preserve ancestral worship, without letting it decline, and (thereby) to link together the blessing of the lineage for eternity, is this not difficult! Alas! These matters of the ancestral shrine, are they not weighty! Those who come after and preserve (the shrine), be most diligent!

嘗聞之，禮有不一而情無窮。為人後者，不知其祖則已，知之而能忽然乎？昔者，程子嘗祀始、先祖矣，紫陽夫子本之，著於《家禮》，後疑其不安而止。我太祖洪武初，許士庶祭曾、祖、考。永樂年修《性理大全》，又頒《家禮》於天下，則遠祖之祀亦通制也，然設位無專祠。今莆諸名族多有之，而世次龕位，家自為度。或分五室，左右祀高、曾以下；或雖分五室，子孫左右序房，各祀其高、曾以下；而皆以中室祀先祖。或按禮分四親各室，以西為上，而先祖止祭於墓所，人反疑之。議禮老儒，迄無定論。誠以人之至情，有不能已，不能一焉。今白水塘之祠，上祀十有餘世，揆諸禮意，似非所宜。然族屬之眾且疏，舍是不舉，則人心渙散，無所維系，欲保宗祀於不墜，綿世澤於無窮，豈不難哉！嗚呼，是祠之關係，其重矣乎！嗣修後人，尚其勉諸！

Peng Shao's comments illustrate that while the Ming court was advocating Cheng-Zhu Neo-Confucian ideas, the worship of and sacrifice to distant ancestors had already become the common form of the rituals of sacrifice to ancestors in Putian. However, because neither Cheng Yi nor Zhu Xi had advocated the establishment of "stand alone specialized shrines for the worship and sacrifice to distant ancestors", this was still a matter of considerable difficulty to contemporary Confucian scholars deeply concerned with ritual propriety. Amongst the popular practices of sacrificing to the ancestors in Putian the vast majority of lineages had already established ancestral halls dedicated to the sacrificial worship of their distant ancestors. Thus the regulations concerning lineage worship and sacrifice in the *Zhuzi jiali* had long ago been surpassed. In Peng Shao's view, although the worship of and sacrifice to distant ancestors in lineage halls contravened the ritual regulations, nevertheless it was of utmost importance in maintaining the solidarity of the lineages. Therefore he felt it was not necessary to get bogged down in ritual regulations, and he advocated the construction of lineage halls dedicated to the worship of distant ancestors.

Another major innovation in sacrificial rituals of ancestral worship during the Ming in Putian was the overcoming of the supreme con-

trol over sacrificial rituals of the *zongzi* (the eldest son of the main descent line of the lineage). In ancient Chinese lineage regulations, the rights of inheritance were controlled by the eldest son of the main descent line, and only the son who had inherited the line was entitled to conduct sacrifices to the ancestors. In the rituals of sacrifice to the ancestors established by Zhu Xi, it is also the eldest son who is the chief sacrificer. This kind of exclusive right of inheritance is obviously unsuited to the broad spread of sacrifices to the ancestors amongst the common people, and it was in fact unable to spread widely. In Cheng-hua 19 (1483) the Confucian scholar Huang Zhongzhao 黃仲昭 in his *Hemai linshi citang ji* (*Record of the Hemei Lin lineage ancestral hall*) 和美林氏祠堂記 stated:³⁵

Uncle Wenfu reflected on the meaning of the origins of water and wood, sincerely seeking to return to (the ways of) antiquity and to the (power of the) origins. Thereupon he built an ancestral hall. With the starting point beginning with his highest ancestor, the remaining ancestors (spirit tablets) were arranged and worshipped according to the zhaomu system. Because of our connections, he asked (me, Huang) Zhongzhao to make a record of the hall, saying, “The ancestral hall was fortunately temporarily completed, and yet I still find some great deficiencies (in my actions), but I do not know what to do about it. When my father passed away I was only six years old. My uncles and cousins were poor and moved about, and the old residences of our ancestors all fell into the hands of other lineages...First we bought a chamber with several columns on the east of Hemei street, in order to reverence our ancestors and to assist with the plans of our kin. Then, depending on the ongoing blessings of our ancestors, our family grew more abundant. Then we moved to the west side of Hemei Street, and converted the former residence into an ancestral hall. This is where we have recently built. Now according to the regulations for the ancestral halls of antiquity, the rites must be presided over by the eldest descendant of the main line. Nowadays, the main descent line of my lineage is unreliable, and those directly descended or closely related to the main line have all moved far away, so that it is inconvenient for them to take part in sacrifices, nor is this what they could stand. These rites of offerings and remembrance were all presided over by myself. In comparison with the Rites, these practices still lacked something to make them harmonious. This is the great deficiency that my heart feels. Fortunately your record will detail these ideas, in order thereby that gentlemen who love the Rites will understand why I have taken this position. It was because there was no alternative.” I (Huang Zhongzhao) maintain that the ancient ancestors

³⁵ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: no. 97, pp. 109–110.

and saintly kings followed human feeling in regulating ritual (conduct), and that therefore ritual has the means to control and adorn human feelings. If a gentleman's reflections on ritual do not negate human feelings, then even if they do not accord with antiquity, still they will not harm his conducting ritual actions. If Uncle Wenfu, upon having encountered this (difficulty), had had to follow every regulation in an effort to accord with antiquity, then the rites for his ancestors and his kin would have had nothing to base themselves on. How could that provide any peace to human feelings? The rites of the ancient kings indeed included cases in which there was no alternative and one had to be flexible and adapt to circumstances. Now in the situation in which Uncle Wenfu found himself, can this not also be called a matter of being flexible in regards to ritual?

叔文甫念水木本源之義，篤反古復始之心，爰創祠堂，斷自高祖，以下昭穆而祀之，因屬仲昭為之記。且曰：“祠幸苟完，而吾猶有所大闕焉，然未如之何也。先君違世時，吾方六歲，世父及伯兄貧窮轉徙，先世舊廬皆入於他姓。…始買屋數楹於和美街東，為奉先事親之計，既而賴祖宗余慶，家以益裕，遂徙居於和美街西，而以舊所居為祠堂，即今所創者是也。然古祠堂之制，必主於宗子。今吾大宗既無所考，而繼祖、繼禰之宗又皆播遷闊遠，於奉祭不便，且非其所堪也。肆凡饗荐裸奠之儀，皆吾自主之，揆之於禮有所未協，此則吾心所大闕者。記幸詳此意，俾愛禮君子知吾所以處此，蓋未如之何也。”某竊惟古先聖王緣人情以制禮，則夫禮者所以節文乎人情者也。君子之酌乎禮，苟於人情無所拂，則雖不合於古，亦不害其為禮矣。叔文甫之所遭如此，若必欲規規以求合於禮，則祖、禰之祀皆無所托，其於人情安乎？先王之禮，固有不得已而用權者。若叔文甫之處此，其亦所謂禮之權者歟？

The founder and main sacrificer of the Lin lineage ancestral hall both were not the first born sons of the main line of the lineage, but Huang Zhongzhao did not consider this problematic. In his view, ritual must accord with human feelings, thus it is capable of changing: given that there is a contradiction between the rules regarding the main descent line and real social needs, there is no need to insist on following the regulations. Another contemporary Confucian scholar of Huang Zhongzhao named Zhou Ying also took a position in support of transforming authority to achieve changes. In his *Shengdun Wushi xinjian citangji* 聖墩吳氏新建祠堂記 (*Record of the new construction of the Shengdun Wu lineage ancestral hall*):

The Wu lineage has long lived in Ketang. The Seventh Generation Ancestor, Commandery Governor (?) Niansi had moved to Shengdun... After four generations (his line) reached Lord (Wu) Zhongyun, who had five sons, each of which established a branch of the lineage. The eldest son was named Guangyi, cognomen Dun'an, who unreservedly devoted

his thoughts to ritual. He suggested building an ancestral hall. But he stopped before he could complete the purchasing of the land. He raised up his eyes and said to (Wu) Chaoqi, "You must work at this." Chaoqi was moved to immediately continue (the work), but those who discussed the (proper) ritual regulations stated that a branch son could not build an ancestral hall. For this reason he hesitated for a long time. Then, fearing that there was no one to continue his ancestor's plan, each year he divided off some fertile land and repeatedly collected rents from these lands in order to sacrifice to his ancestral kin in his private chambers. Now he has grown old... (he) used stone and wood gathered by his predecessors and raised more supplies. He built an ancestral hall to the southwest of his former residence, on some convenient land. According to the Rites, from the *biezi* (all the other sons besides the eldest) on down, there are those who continued the line of the highest ancestor, those who continued the line of the great-grandfather, those who continued the line of the grandfather, and all those who continue the line of the deceased parent. These four lines of transmission are at the origin of the ancestral system. Each of the four lines had their separate temple, and each was led in ritual sacrifice by their own main descent line son. When there were (ritual) activities in the temples, each line's people would each go to their respective places... Now as for the building of an ancestral hall, this can only be done if one has adequate funding and ability. If the main descent line son cannot build it, it is permissible for the other sons to build it. The other sons can build the ancestral hall, then either the main descent line son can lead the sacrifice, or if the main descent line son has some difficulties, then the other sons can lead the ritual sacrifices. On the basis of the Rites, there is nothing unacceptable (about this).

吳氏舊居可塘，七世祖念四府君徙聖墩。……四傳至仲允公，生五子，分為五房。其長曰光益，號遜菴，慨然以尚禮為念，建議立祠堂，蓋以購地未就而止。……因舉矚目朝器曰：“汝必勉之。”朝器感激立繼，而議禮者謂支子不得立祠堂，用是遲迴者久之。又恐無繼先志，歲惟割腴田若干，俾迭收租，而祀宗親於私室。今老矣，…即先世所蓄木石而增益之，建祠堂於祖居西南，叢便地也。按禮，別子而下，有繼高祖之宗，繼曾祖之宗，繼祖之宗，繼禰之宗。此四宗者，宗法所自起也。四宗自各為廟，各以宗子主其祭。有事於廟，則宗人各以其屬從。……若夫祠堂建置，顧有財力何如耳，宗子不能建，諸子建之可也。諸子建祠堂，以宗子主祀事，或宗子有故，而以支諸子攝行祀事，揆諸禮，無不可者。

During the process of the construction of the Wu lineage ancestral hall, some people claimed that "sons of the collateral lines are not eligible to establish an ancestral hall" 支子不得立祠堂, but Zhou Ying disagreed. His view was that lineage halls differed from the Family Temples of antiquity, and thus the eldest son had no exclusive claim on the power to conduct sacrifices to the ancestors. All the descendant

males had the right to build a lineage hall and to carry out sacrificial activities. He also felt that:

The lineages of Putian are widely dispersed, and as it is not possible to build lineage halls everywhere, they gather their lineage together into an overall (lineage) hall, in which they sacrifice before a gathering of the entire lineage. Each time they make offerings and announce prayers, this is under the supervision of the head of the lineage (*zuzhang*), and each of the descendants of each line (including the main descent line and the other minor descent lines) must follow his directions. Although this is not entirely in accordance with (classical) ritual, the important thing is that it places importance on the lineage, unites the kin and gathers people's hearts. This comes close to achieving what the Book of Changes called the Way of "the gathering of the various streams".

莆人以族屬繁衍,不能遍立祠堂,故合族而為總祠,祀而群宗並舉。凡裸獻祝告,皆行於其族之長,各宗之子各以其屬從。雖於禮未盡合,要之重祖宗、合族屬、收人心,而《易》所謂聚湊之道,大概為得之矣。³⁶

This is to say that in the popular lineage halls of Putian, what was actually going on was the gathering of the lineage to conduct the sacrifices together and that each first born descendant of a main line had to obey the commands of the lineage head. Moreover, even though this did not accord with classical ancestral regulation, it did indeed fit into the gathering together of the various streams (of the lineage), and thus was most reasonable.

In Ming Putian there were several rather conservative scholar gentry who insisted that the construction of lineage halls and the sacrifices to the ancestors must accord with classical ritual regulations, but they had no power to contain the reality of "overstepping of the regulations" that had become a common occurrence. All they could do was to try every which way to achieve a rational interpretation of these phenomenon. In Ming Zhengde 8 (1513), Lin Jun 林俊, who had served as Minister of Punishments, wrote in his *Yishan Zengshi citang ji* (*Record of the Zeng ancestral hall of Yishan*) 沂山曾氏祠堂記:³⁷

The (Family) Temples had their own Rules and Regulation, and yet later generations changed them into Ancestral Halls. And yet the sacrifices extended (only) to the great-great grandfather, and so the Founding Ancestor and the early ancestors had no sacrifices. (Yet) their descend-

³⁶ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 112, pp. 131–132.

³⁷ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 118, 139–140.

ants, by extending their worship of their ancestors to the utmost, were like people walking along the same road (?). Therefore the lineages through the ages have worshipped their Founding Ancestor, in order to tie the lineage together. This (new ritual order) was called a “Lineage Shrine”. Now if through the transmission of (responsibility for) the various rites the ritual regulations are transgressed, and if the main descent line is not established the ritual system becomes disordered. What I find problematic about the rites of most current lineage shrines (*shici*) is that their rites do not deserve close study and the meanings (of the ritual acts) cannot be fully expressed (within them), so I do find them worthy of recording. Now the shrine of the Zeng lineage of Yishan had rituals that were close to their meanings... There is a single hall with three niches. In the center (is worshipped) Zhonghu, the Founding Ancestor. On the left is Juzhai, the early ancestor. On the right is Taiyi, who is the ancestor of the main descent line. Now off in two other niches to the sides are the Tai Er generation to the left and the Taisan generation to the right. These are the minor descent lines. All five are exclusively managed by their respective main descent lines. People's surnames and personal names are detailed on the tablets in the niches. If there is no major descent line (representative) there is no sacrifice offered, for fear of overstepping the ritual regulations.... The other members of the lineage sacrifice to their ancestors in their own homes. Thus the shrine has a set group of ancestors, and the lineage has fixed rituals, the kin of the lineage are united and filial reverence flourishes. The *Book of Rites* states, “How painful? Envy (over the overstepping of ritual roles).” Ritual change due to circumstances is also an aspect of the marvelousness of the (ritual) methods, through which human feelings are expressed, so that, with no obstruction, the meaning (of the ritual acts) becomes clear.

廟有制，後世易以祠堂，然祭及高祖，則始祖、先祖皆無祭。子孫服盡，如同路人，故世姓有始祖之祀以聯族之合，謂之族祠。然傳敘俱祀而禮制踰，宗子不立而宗法亂。予於世祠禮不足稽而義不足以起，皆不記。沂山曾氏之祠，禮與義近焉。……一堂三室，中鍾壺，始祖也；右矩齋，先祖也；右太一，大宗祖也。別其旁二室，左太二，右太三，小宗祖也。五其主專之，子姓則名系於室之版，不主不祀，懼僭也。……餘各祭於寢，則祠有定祖，祖有定祭，族屬合而孝敬興。《禮》曰：“傷哉！貪也。”禮之權，亦法之巧，以各伸其情，無嫌而義自見。

Lin Jun expressed praise for the regulations of the Yishan Zeng lineage ancestral hall, primarily because they had made a clear distinction between the ancestors of the major and the minor lines, and had put the spirit tablets of these different ancestors into different niches in the lineage hall, enabling them to be used for distinct sacrificial purposes. He also argued that by writing the names of (descendants of) different descent lines on distinct spirit tablets, instead of all together on a single

spirit tablet, was another way of avoiding the overstepping of ritual rules. But in fact, the object of sacrifice and worship at the Zeng lineage ancestral hall was no different from that of the other “clan shrines”. Only at a formal, symbolic level did it appear to more closely abide with the demands of ritual regulations. Lin Jun also felt that it was necessary to worship and sacrifice to the (regional) founding ancestor, but that people should do so in accordance with “the Tang rule that those below the third rank should only offer up ritual prayers to the ancestors as a whole 唐制三品以下得舉禘祫之文”, and that if so the ritual could be shown to have undergone some legitimate changes.³⁸ During the Hongzhi period (1488–1505), the Lin lineage restored the tombs of their ancestors, and Lin Jun again remarked “The restoration of tombs and the sacrificing at the tombs is not an ancient custom, and if minor descent lines carry this out it is even more foundationless. But lifted up by ones emotions, meaningful (deeds) arise. Thus there is no harm in this becoming a ritual “修墓、祭墓, 非古也, 小宗行之尤無據. 然揆情起義, 亦無害為禮.”³⁹ One can see that Lin Jun also advocated the idea that rituals arise from the meanings or intentions of the participants, and that it was thus permissible to create new rituals of ancestral worship in accordance with new social needs.

In popular activities of sacrifice to the ancestors in Putian, the ritual regulations of antiquity and the sacrificial rites of the Confucians were constantly being overcome, with the result that Confucian scholar gentry were forever trying to provide new interpretations of the principles of lineage law, and thus to establish new codes for ritual activity. These developments also reflect the continuing transformation of the lineage organization, as well as changes in regional culture.

³⁸ Lin Jun 林俊, “Huangxiang Huangshi citangji 黃巷黃氏祠堂記”, in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995:No. 119, pp. 140–141. [Scholars continue to debate the meaning of the di and xia sacrifices, but Mao Qiling 毛奇齡 suggested that the term implies the worship of the ancestors as a whole in his essay 郊社禘祫問 in *Huangqing jingjie xubian* 皇清經解續編, edited by Wang Xianqian 王先謙輯, 謙輯, 南菁書院, 清光緒 14 (1888) 第 5 冊.]

³⁹ (Ming) Lin Jun (明) 林俊, “Linshi chongxiu xianmuji 林氏重修先墓記”, in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 113, pp. 132–133.

The altar of the soil and the harvest of the Sub-cantons and the system of temples dedicated to popular gods

The term *shê* in ancient China referred to the “ruler of the earth”, and later this was extended to mean the god or spirit of the earth or the symbol of a particular administrative region. In the pre-Qin period, the establishment of a *shê* altar and the carrying out of sacrifices to its god was the prerogative of the aristocratic nobility, closely linked to the feudal system of the division of land and the enfeoffment of feudal lords. *The Book of Rites: Methods of Sacrifice*, states “The King establishes the *Shê* altar on behalf of all the *xing* (surname groups), and this is called the Great *Shê* altar. The feudal lords establish a *shê* altar on behalf of the hundred surnames and this is called the *guoshê* (*shê* altar of the state), the nobleman takes those below him and gathers them into a group to establish a *shê* altar, and this is called “establishing a *shê* altar”. From the Qin and Han onwards, when the imperial system of commanderies and districts overtook the feudal divisions, the *shê* gradually transformed into a symbol of different administrative regions. Thus one finds the provincial *shê*, or the district *shê*. Prior to the Ming, even though commoners often established their own *shê* altars and sacrificed to the gods, these actions do not seem to have given rise to any systematic rules or regulations, and they do not seem to have had any necessary relationship with administrative regions. In the early Ming, when the entire empire was establishing a unified system of *shê* altars within the sub-cantons of the empire, for the first time the popular sacrificial activities of the people’s *shê* altars were formally absorbed into the official administrative regulatory order. During the Ming and Qing, because the system of *shê* altars of the sub-cantons directly merged with the system of popular god temples, these developments had a profound influence on the transformation of regional social culture.

The earliest *lishê* (*shê* altars of the *li*) in Putian were in fact popular god temples, which differed from the official *shê* altars of the commandery or the administrative center. Liu Kezhuang 劉克莊 in his *Yanyunsi Yuyang Hanxiansheng citangji* (*Record of the shrine to Han Yuyang at the Yanyun monastery*) 宴雲寺玉陽韓先生祠堂記 pointed out:⁴⁰

⁴⁰ (Song) Liu Kezhuang 宋劉克莊, *Houcun xiansheng daquanji* 後村先生大全集, j. 93. p. 805.

Formerly when a village gentleman died, he was sacrificed to at the *shê* altar. What is the *shê* altar? It is not the *shê* altar of the commandery or the administrative city with its open-air altar, with only a (carved name tablet) but no icon. In any marketplace with three residences, or any settlement of a few households, there must be a shrine wherein people can pray for blessings and long life, with a god statue in it. I call these *lishê* (*shê* altars of the villages). Worshipping the village gentlemen in such a place shows that displaying reverence to the sagely is the same as serving the gods.

古鄉先生歿，祭於社。社者何？非若郡邑之社不屋而壇也，有名號而無像設也。三家之市、數十戶之聚，必有求福祈年之祠，有像設焉，謂之‘里社’是也。祀鄉先生於是，敬賢之意與事神均也。

This means that the official *shê* altars had only an open-air altar and a carved name of the god. Thus they did not have temple structures and statues of the gods, both of which could be found in the *lishê* (village temples), in which one could also offer sacrifices to the village sages. The popular god temples of Putian were originally the site for the activities of the “shamanic invokers (of the gods)”, and were not under the purview of official ritual orders, thus they were often viewed as “excessive cults”. During the Song dynasty, because the scholar gentry class actively participated in the sacrificial rituals of the popular god temples, the ritual traditions and the symbolic meaning of the popular god temples underwent major changes, and some of the popular god temples were absorbed into the official register of imperial sacrifices. For example, the Shaoxing 8 (1138) *You Song Xinghuajun xiangying-miaoji* 有宋興化軍祥應廟記 states:⁴¹

Ten *li* to the north of Putian Commandery there is a god shrine, which is called the Temple of the Great Official. In 1107 Emperor Huizong had business in the southern suburbs (of Kaifeng), where he conducted sacrifices to the myriad deities. At this time, he called for reports from the local officials on the gods who were not included on the sacrificial register, be they the gods of famous mountains and great rivers or those gods that had performed meritorious service to the people. Thus the court first learned of the merits of this god from the people. The following year (1108) the shrine was granted the name “Shrine of Auspicious Response”. Nine years later (1116) the emperor conducted another sacrificial rite to the myriad deities at the Mingtang (Hall of Light: the Imperial Sacrificial Hall), and the people of our community again reported

⁴¹ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 14, pp. 11–14. For a complete translation of this text, see Clark 1995: 392–398.

the merits of the god to the court and requested that he receive a title.... Then the emperor took up his brush and signed (the edict) naming the god Duke of Manifest Kindness (Xianhui hou). This was the fourth year of the Xuanhe reign period (1122). Note that as a Duke, the god already had his temple, where he received bloody sacrifice from the people on the occasion of the five seasonal rites...As for the name, "Shrine of the Great Official", it is said that there was a local man who rose to high rank. On retirement he returned to live out his old age in the village. Every year he led the most talented and virtuous youth and village elders on the day of the village festival (*shè*) in praying to the god for abundant harvests. They would carefully set out the plates and goblets, and spread the ritual vessels. Then they would bow humbly and ascend into the hall by order of age and with great humility. It was just like the ancient village wine drinking ceremony. The village people took great pleasure (in the ritual), and so they named the shrine...The old temple had only a few rooms, and had already lasted through many years of rain and wind above and all around, so that there was no longer anywhere to take shelter from (the elements). In 1083, Vice Minister of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices Lord Fang Qiao first expanded the grounds and enlarged the temple. In 1116, Supervisor of the Household Administration of the Heir Apparent Lord Fang Hui led the men of the village in raising funds and renewing the temple. Today (i.e., 1138) the god majestically faces the south, looking over his subordinates. The regalia and the rites of presenting offerings are all (performed) according to rank. One can see that this was quite different from the way (sacrifices) were done in the temple in the past. When the common people pray a Divination Master presents the text. They gaze upwards at the awesome visage (of the god), and are entirely sincere when approaching and moving back from the god. This we also see was very different from the way (the god was approached) in the past. At the time of spring and autumn sacrifices, the old and young proceed (before the god) in order, offering cool wine and fragrant victuals. "When the god is sated (a quote from the *Book of Songs*)"—they withdraw to the position of guests, where they grasp their cups and hoist their goblets. As for admonishments and punishments, there are none who do not obey (the commandments of the god). Again, we cannot be certain that people in the past were like this. From near and far people come running to beg for spiritual power at the temple. Any new tidings are reported to the god, and movements away and back (to the village) are announced. If anyone is ill they must pray (to the god) and anyone who has upcoming affairs has to first prognosticate (by casting divination blocks) and only thereafter goes about their business. Again, who knows if people in the past were able to do things this way? (On major occasions, such as) when the Emperor performs the suburban sacrifices, and afterwards, whenever a new Prefect of (Xinghua) Commandery came to take up his post he would first come to worship and report to the god, in order to display his great sincerity—this also was something that did not occur in earlier times. All of these matters listed

above were different in earlier times. Thus it was appropriate that the temple was regarded as still being too cramped. The temple (lit. resting place of the god) was gradually made luxurious and grand. This (process) was appropriate to the times.

郡北十里有神祠，故號“大官廟”。大觀元年，徽宗皇帝有事於南郊，褒百神而肆祀之，於是詔天下名山大川及諸神之有功於民而未在祀典者，許以事聞。部使者始列神之功狀於朝，從民請也。次年，賜廟號曰“祥應”。其後九年，親祀明堂，復修百神之祀。而吾鄉之人，又相與狀神之功績，乞爵命於朝廷。……迺宸筆刊定“顯惠侯”，時則宣和之四年也。謹按，侯當五季時，已有祠宇，血食於吾民。……曰“大官廟”者，相傳云，鄉人仕有至於大官者，退而歸老於其鄉，帥其子弟與鄉之耆舊若少而有才德者，每歲於社之日，相與祈穀於神。既而徹籩豆，陳盞斝，遜而昇堂，序長幼而敦孝弟，如古所謂鄉飲酒者。鄉人樂而慕之，遂以名其廟。……舊廟數間，歷年既久，上雨旁風，無所庇障。元豐六年，太常少卿方公嶠，始增地而而廣之。政和六年，太子詹事方公會，又率鄉人襄金而新之。今神巍然南面，秩視王侯，其冕服之制，薦獻之禮，皆有品數，視前時為不同也。祈祐跪拜，卜史薦辭，瞻望威容，進退維慎，亦視前時為不同也。春秋祈報，長幼率從，酒冽肴馨，神具醉止，退就賓位，執盞揚觶，有勸有罰，莫不率命，又不知往時人物若是否？遠近奔走，乞靈祠下，時新必薦，出入必告，疾病必禱，凡有作為必卜而後從事，又不知往時人物能若是否？以至天子郊祀之後，郡侯視事之初，又當來享來告，以薦嘉誠，此亦前時之所無也。是數者，皆與前時不同，宜其視舊宮為猶隘，寢以侈大，亦其時哉！

This Xiangyingmiao temple was originally a popular god temple, which was turned in the Northern Song into a “Temple of the Great Official”. At the end of the Northern Song the temple received an official name and the god was enfeoffed, and the cult was absorbed into the official register of sacrifices. During this process, the scholar gentry elite continuously reformed the sacrificial rituals, in order to make them comply more closely with Confucian forms of sacrificial rites and the demands of the official register of sacrifices.

Many local gods from Putian received temple plaques and imperial enfeoffments over the Song dynasty. This caused local scholar gentry to play an even more active role in the god temple sacrificial rituals, leading to the reform of the *lishê* (village temple) sacrificial ritual order. In Xuanhe 5 (1133) the Shengdun ancestral temple which worshipped the Tongtian shennu (Goddess who communicates with heaven) of Meizhou received a temple plaque naming the temple Shunji 順濟 (Temple of Harmonious Deliverance). The local powerful literati Li Fu 李富 rebuilt the temple and reformed the sacrificial rituals. Some questions were raised, to the effect that:

Formerly the saint revered at Shengdun was placed on the central altar, while the white young god was on the right, and the divine goddess was off on the left. In the new temple, the goddess has been moved to the center of the main hall, and the god that was to her right has been moved the left, and the god on the left (has been moved to the altar) to her right. How could those who provide sacrifices and beseech spiritual powers before the temple not harbor some small doubts (about these changes).

舊尊聖墩者居中，皙而少者居左，神女則西偏也。新廟或遷於正殿中，右者左之，左者右之。牲醴乞靈於祠下者，寧不少疑？

Li Fu's dependant Liao Pengfei replied:

The divine goddess was born on Meizhou, but her displaying of her spiritual powers actually began here at the (Sacred) Mound. Afterwards the temple was given an imperial plaque, and her cult was entered into the register of imperial sacrifices, and this too began here at this (Sacred) Mound (temple). Thus it is appropriate that the goddess should be placed in the main hall (of the temple).

神女生於湄州，至顯靈蹟，實自此墩始；其後賜額，載諸祀典，亦自此墩始，安於正殿宜矣。⁴²

This is to say, the rank and position of the god was not determined by the local tradition, but was determined by the imperial register of sacrifices. Liao Pengfei also argued that the symbolic meaning of a village temple cult arose from its connection to the register of imperial sacrifices, rather than from the “awesome spiritual powers” of the goddess herself. He stated:

Li have *shè* altars, and all under heaven sacrifice at them, but the people of Fujian are especially reverent. Vast and lofty temples, with solemn carved god statues, rise up imposingly facing south, showing the image of a kingly lord. How could this be a matter of overstepping the bounds of propriety in order to display beauty? Those gods who have benefited the people, and who have achieved merit in the eyes of the state, are honored with titles of enfeoffment. This is not a matter of merely showing off their awesome spiritual powers.

里有社，通天下祀之，閩人尤崇。恢闢祠宇，嚴飾像貌，巍然南面，取肖王侯。夫豈過為僭越以示美觀？蓋神有德於民，有功於國，蒙被爵號，非是列以彰其威靈也。⁴³

⁴² (Song) Liao Pengfei (宋) 廖鵬飛, *Shengdun zumiao chongjian shunjiimiaoji* 聖敦祖廟重建順濟廟記”南宋紹興二十年 (1150), in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 16, pp. 15–17.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

This kind of *lishê* village temple which merged with the imperial register of sacrifices was in fact already a sign of identification with the imperial state.

The scholar gentry of Song Putian also used the system of enfeoffment to bring their own family gods into the imperial register of sacrifices, in order to create a legal basis for their own forms of ancestral worship. For example, the god worshipped in the Xianjimiao (Temple of Manifest Salvation) of Shuinan (Huangshi) 水南顯濟廟 was originally a member of the Zhu lineage, who according to legend conducted many miracles during his life, and who was sacrificed to after his death in the Zhu lineage Chunxian shushê (Academy of the Gathered Gods) 群仙書社. He was popularly known as Zhu Zongguan 朱總管 (General Zhu). In Jianyan 4 (1130) the temple received a plaque and an enfeoffment for the god, and in Baoyu 4 (1256) the god was promoted and given the title Fushun zhangliehou 福順彰烈侯 (Duke of Brilliant Display of Blessings and Harmoniousness).⁴⁴

Thereupon, the members of the lineage felt that they had received (imperial) favor and praise and it was a grand affair at that time. They removed the name of the Gathering of the Gods Academy and put up the golden plaque which read “Imperially bequeathed Temple of Manifest Salvation”, and the founding temple was also renamed this way. Afterwards, descendants lived all around the temple in great profusion, and divided into the upper temple and lower temple (halls), and they continued to sacrifice to and worship the gods of the five grains, and used the temple for spring prayers and autumn rites of thanksgiving, while the lineage hall was maintained as before.

於是，族人見恩寵褒光，一時盛事，乃去‘群仙書社’之號，匾金額曰‘勅賜顯濟廟’，其祖廟亦如之。其後子孫環居眾多，分為上下廟，仍祀五穀之神，及為春祈秋報之所，祠堂則仍其舊。

The Zhu lineage of Shuiman were one of the prominent lineages of Putian, and in the Southern Song they produced an abundance of degree students “衣冠蕃衍”, totaling over forty-two officials. They placed their lineage hall within the midst of a god temple primarily in order to achieve legal status for their own ancestral worship.

During the Ming Hongwu period (1368–1398) the new official form of the *lishê* (*shê* altar of the sub-cantons) was promulgated. It

⁴⁴ *Chongxian shushe citang ji* 實仙書社祠堂記 (*Record of the ancestral hall of the Academy of the Gathered Gods*), a Song dynasty inscription by Zhu Yuangong 朱元功, in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995, No. 45, pp. 50–51.

required each sub-canton of the empire to establish one *shê* altar to worship the god of the grain and the harvest, and that sacrifices be carried out to this god on the first Xu day of the second and eighth lunar months. At the same time, the emperor also commanded each sub-canton to establish a *litan* 厥壇 altar to the unrequited dead, to worship and sacrifice to the ghosts who receive no offerings, and to organize three sacrifices per year at these altars. The *Ming Huidain* 明會典 records.⁴⁵

Each 100 families of the people of every village is to establish an altar to worship the spirits of the five types of soil (mountain forests, streams and marshes, hills, embankments and dikes, and level or low ground) and the five grains (hemp, millet, wheat, barley and beans—later lists include rice), solely to pray that the alternation of rainfall and sunshine may be timely, and the five grains will be abundant. Each year [the representative of] one household will in rotation be group head. By a constant stream set up a pure altar. For the sacrifices in the spring and autumn one should in advance prepare the sacrificial objects. At the appointed day one must agree to gather for the sacrifice. The sacrifice requires one sheep and one pig; wine, fruit, incense, and candles may also be used as appropriate. When the sacrifices are finished, then carry out ritual wine drinking in the assembly. At the meeting first order one man to read the oath of restraining the strong and supporting the weak. When the oath has been read, the elderly and the young take their seats in order to extend their happiness to the utmost, and then retire. Their duty is to revere the spirits and bring harmony to the village... All would follow the Hongwu ritual regulations, in order to make local customs profound.

In every region each sub-canton of 100 families must set up one altar to sacrifice to the unworshipped spirits and ghosts. This is exclusively in order to pray for the peace and wellbeing of the people, and for the health and abundance of livestock. Each year there are to be three sacrifices, in spring at *Qingming*, in autumn on 7/15, and in winter on 10/1. The ritual sacrificial animals and wine should be in accordance with local custom. The rotation of group heads and the wine drinking following the sacrifice, as well as other rites including the recitation of the oath are all the same as those for the *shê* altar of the *li* sub-canton. (trans. D. Overmyer 1989–90: 211).

凡民間各處鄉村人民，每里一百戶內，立壇一所，祀五土五穀之神，專以祈禱雨陽時若，五穀豐登。每歲一戶輪當會首，常川潔淨壇場，

⁴⁵ [Translated in D. Overmyer, “Attitudes towards popular religion in ritual texts of the Chinese state: The collected statutes of the great Ming”, *Cahiers d’Extrême-Asie* 5 (1989-90): 207–212.]

遇春秋二社，預期舉辦祭物，至日約聚祭祀。其祭用一羊、一豚，酒、果、香燭隨用。祭畢，就行會飲，會中先令一人讀抑強扶弱之誓。……讀誓詞畢，長幼以次就坐，盡歡而退。務在恭敬神明，和睦鄉里，以厚風俗。凡各鄉村，每里一百戶內，立壇一所，祭無祀神鬼，專為祈禱民庶安康、孳畜蕃盛。每歲三祭：春清明日、秋七月十五日、冬十月一日。祭物牲、酒，隨鄉俗置辦。其輪流會首及祭畢會飲、讀誓等儀，與里社同。⁴⁶

With the exception of these five sacrifices at the *shê* altar and the *litan* altar the emperor prohibited any other popular religious activity:

Religious leaders or instructors, and priests, who, pretending thereby to call down heretical gods, write charms or pronounce them over water, or carry round palanquins (with idols), or invoke saints, calling themselves orthodox leaders, chief parsons, or female leaders; further, all societies calling themselves at random While Lotus communities of the Buddha Maitreya, or the Ming-tsун religion, or the school of the White Cloud, and other names, together with all that answers to practices of the *tso tao* or *yiduan*; finally, they who in secret places have prints and images, and offer incense to them, or hold meetings which take place at night and break up by day, whereby the people are stirred up and misled under the pretext of cultivating virtue...shall be sentenced, the principal perpetrators to strangulation, and their accomplices each to a hundred blows wit the long stick, followed by a lifetime banishment to the distance of three thousand miles. If anyone in the army or among the people dress or ornament the image of a god, and receive that god with the clang of cymbals and the beating of drums, and hold sacrificial meetings in his honor, one hundred blows with the long stick shall be administered, but only to the principals. If village-chiefs, when privy to such things (as detailed above), do not inform the authorities, they shall receive each forty blows with the short bamboo lath. Services of prayer and thanks-giving (for the harvest) in honor of the common local gods of the Soil, performed in spring and autumn respectively, do not fall under these restrictions. (trans. De Groot (1973 (1903-1904)), pp. 137-138).

凡師巫假降邪神、書符呪水、扶鸞禱聖，自號端公、太保、師婆，及妄稱彌勒佛、白蓮社、明尊教、白雲宗等，一應左道亂正之術，或隱藏圖像、燒香集眾、夜聚曉散，佯修善事，扇惑人民者，為首者絞，為從者各杖一百，流三千里。若軍民裝扮神像、鳴鑼鼙鼓、迎賽會者，杖一百，罪坐為首之人。里長知而不首者，各笞四十。其民間春秋義社，不在禁限。⁴⁷

⁴⁶ (Wanli) *Ming Huidain* 萬歷明會典, j. 94, pp. 15-16, *Libu 2* 禮部二。

⁴⁷ (Wanli) *Ming Huidian* (萬歷)明會典, j. 165 *Luli 6*, 律例六。

From these passages one can see that in the Ming the legally acceptable system of popular sacrifice and worship only extended legal protection to the *lishē* and *litan* sacrifices, while all other religious activity was considered illegal. On its surface, the Ming *lishē* sacrificial system aimed to establish a unified sacrificial ritual order that would absorb popular religious activity into an officially sanctioned ritual system, in order to prevent all kinds of heterodox teachings from taking the opportunity to foment chaos. However, because the *lishē* sacrificial ritual directly incorporated official classical models of sacrificial ritual, and did not build temples or set up god statues, it completely removed itself from the original popular traditions of the village *lishē* temples, and thus was unable to be successfully promulgated across the empire.

So far we have not discovered any documentation on the concrete circumstances of the early Ming creation of the official *lishē* system in Putian. However, by following back the statements of later commentators and by examining surviving cultural artifacts, it is clear that *shē* altars and *litan* altars were established in each sub-canton of Putian at that time. However, the sacrificial rituals commanded at the start of the Ming for the *lishē* and *litan* altars appear not to have been put into practice, and the traditional popular religious practices of the people do not appear to have been prohibited. The *Hongzhi Xinghuafuzhi* in its description of the *Lishē* system clearly stated “the rituals of the community *shē* altars have long since been abandoned, and those who seek to rule should seek to oversee the people and carry out these rites” 鄉社禮久廢, 為政君子宜督民行之.⁴⁸ In its description of the annual *Yuanxiao* festival “community *shē* prayers for the coming year” we find the following description:

Each leader of the *shē* association gathers the masses at the middle of the month and carries out prayers for the coming year, with (Daoist) sacrifices. They carry the *shēzhu* (god of the community) on procession around the community boundaries. Drums and music lead the way, and lanterns light up the way. There is not a single family that is not visited (in these festivities). In Shuinan (Huangshi) of Putian, only the Fang, the Xu, and the Qiu lineages build open air *shē* altars and carry out sacrifices at them in spring and autumn. They do not follow in the roaming pleasures of the *lishē*. Their rituals can be taken (as a model).

⁴⁸ (*Hongzhi*) *Xinghua fuzhi* (弘治) 興化府志, j.21, p. 12, *Liyuezhi* 禮樂志.

各社會首於月半前後，集眾作祈年醮及畀社主繞境。鼓樂導前，張燈照路，無一家不到者。莆水南獨方氏、徐氏、丘氏，築壇為社，春秋致祭，不逐里社邀嬉，其禮可取。⁴⁹

This illustrates that with the exception of a small number of great lineages the people of Putian no longer carried out sacrificial worship at the *lishé* altars, but instead had broadly revived their traditions of inviting the gods and holding competitive festivals in their honor. The *Bamin tongzhi* 八閩通志, composed about the same time, also has a similar description of the *Yuanxiao* “praying for the New Year” activities:

From the 13th (of the first lunar month) to the 17th, the people of the villages gather with their fellow villagers and hold communal sacrifices to pray for blessings for the New Year. On these nights, they use drums and music to invite their tutelary gods, and go on procession with them around their territories. Every commoner family sets up an incense altar and waits for the god to arrive and then reverently offers wine and fruit, burns spirit money, and bows to send him off.

自十三日起，至十七日，里民各合其閩社之人，為祈年醮。是夜，以鼓樂迎其土神，遍行境內，民家各設香案，候神至則奠酒果、焚楮錢，拜送之。⁵⁰

The chief editor of the *Bamin tongzhi* was Huang Zhongzhao, who believed that this kind of invocation of the gods and competitive festivities and rituals for beseeching blessings for the New Year was the survival of the ancient rites of the village Nuo (Exorcism) 亦古鄉人儻之遺意.⁵¹ Late in his life, when he was living in retirement in his home village, he wrote a poem which reads,

When spring rain first falls water fills the streams,
The flutes and drums of the god's temple just now pray for a good New Year,
Since I have come I desire to follow local custom,
So I quickly pawn my spring clothes so I can make a contribution to the *Shé* (community temple)

春雨初過水滿川，神祠簫鼓正祈年。我來亦欲隨鄉俗，急典春衣入社錢。⁵²

⁴⁹ (Hongzhi) *Xinghua fuzhi* (弘治) 興化府志, j. 15, p. p. 16 *Fengsuzhi* 風俗志.

⁵⁰ (Hongzhi) *Bamin tongzhi* (弘治) 八閩通志, j. 3, *Fengsu: dili* 風俗·地理, p. 50.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² (Ming) Huang Zhongzhao (明)黃仲昭, *Weixuan wenji* 未軒文集, j. 11, p. 12. *Qiyanshi* 七言詩.

Although he of course knew that the invoking of the gods in competitive festivals did not correspond with the official regulations concerning the sacrificial rituals of the *shê* altar of the sub-canton, he adopted a more relaxed attitude of going along with local customs.

In the mid-Ming period, due to the ever increasing intensity of the popular god temple ritual activities, a minority of Putian scholar gentry grew dissatisfied and vigorously called on local officials to “demolish excessive shrines” 毁淫祠 and to once again institute the “ritual reforms of the Hongwu period” 洪武禮制. In the early Chenghua period (1465–1487), Peng Shao 彭韶 stated in his *Yu Junshou Yue Gong shu* (Letter to Prefect, Lord Yue) 與郡守岳公書:⁵³

Putian was originally a land of barbarians, and its excessive shrines are especially numerous. Even though powerful and outstanding leaders emerge regularly, even they are unable to reform (these cults). The gods that are worshipped are beyond categorization or comprehension. The leaders of the mean and humble, point out each month the birthdays of the gods, and collect money to sacrifice to them: at these times they transmit statements about disaster and good fortune in order to frighten the villagers, and many (political) rumors are spread in this way. At this moment the Confucian scholar Lin Bangjun who abhorred excessive cults requested to take control over them and went around to all regions and whenever he encountered the site of an excessive cult, he ordered that it be demolished. In standing temples, he established the two altars of the village *shê* and village *li*, in accordance with the Hongwu ritual regulations. He caused the village elders to lead their community residents to conduct sacrifices at the appropriate seasons, and so there would be enough to sacrifice to the gods of the earth and grain, and the (unrequited dead of the *litan*) would not be hungry like ghosts with no descendants.⁵⁴

莆中故蠻地，淫祠特多，雖豪傑之士時出，未之能革。所祀神，類不可曉。奸黠之魁，每月指神生日，斂錢祭之；時出禍福語，以懼村氓，妖言之興，多由於此。此間有儒生林邦俊，酷怪淫祀，乞特委之，俾行四境，遇淫祀處，悉令除毀。就以所在廟宇，依洪武禮制，設立鄉社、鄉厲二壇，使鄉老率其居民，以時薦祭，庶足以祀土穀之神，而不餒若敖氏之鬼也。

Peng Shao obtained his *jinshi* degree in 1457, and served as Minister of Punishments, and later retired to his home village. This letter was no doubt written to encourage the District Magistrate Yue Zheng 岳正

⁵³ (Ming) Peng Shao (明)彭韶, *Peng Huian ji* 彭惠安集, j. 8, pp. 3–4, *Shuqi* 書启.

⁵⁴ (lit. the ghosts of the (Ruo) Ao family, an allusion to the eradication of the house of Ruo Ao in the *Zuozhuan*, Duke Xuan, 4th year.

to carry out a policy of “local regulation of customs”. Yue Zheng became Putian District Magistrate in 1465 and left office after five years. According to the *Qianlong Putian xianzhi*, during his tenure Yue Zheng built the Hanjiang Academy and the Confucian Temple, and also demolished excessive shrines.⁵⁵ Clearly, he adopted Peng Shao’s call for the destruction of licentious, excessive shrines, but the actual effects of his policies are unknown. In the Zhengde period (1506–1521) the Putian District Magistrate Lei Yinglong 雷應龍, with the backing of the scholar gentry elite, “strenuously destroyed excessive shrines 力毀淫祠.⁵⁶ During his six years in office, Lei Yinglong is said to have “destroyed 800 temples dedicated to unacceptable demons, and only to have sacrificed to the Master of Letters (Zhu Xi), and the various sages, in order to make solemn the “transforming by means of the Way” (of Neo-Confucianism) 毀非鬼之祠八百區, 專祀文公、諸賢, 以隆道化.⁵⁷ Even so, some popular god temples were able to transform (or disguise) themselves in order to escape destruction, such as the Hanjiang Longjinshè temple 涵江龍津社 which changed itself into the Shrine of the Loyal and the Brave 忠烈祠, or the Shengfei (Saintly Concubine) Temple 聖妃宮 which changed into the Shouze Shuyuan (Long-lived imperial blessings Academy) 壽澤書院. Obviously all these changes were made in order to avoid elimination as an excessive cult.⁵⁸ Another example was the Hanjiang Xinyoushè 涵江新有社 which according to legend preserved a plaque written by the anti-Mongol local hero Wen Tianxiang 文天祥. When the District Magistrate Lei Yinglong was destroying excessive cults, he saw the writings of master (Wen) and so called for the preservation of the temple 知縣雷應龍毀淫祠時, 見公筆迹, 委員重修.⁵⁹

In the mid-Ming period, the activities of the Putian popular god temples gradually recovered, and the officials were no longer in a position to carry out campaigns of destruction of illicit temples. What is

⁵⁵ *Qianlong Putian xianzhi* (乾隆) 《莆田縣志》, j. 8 *Zhiguanzhi: minghuanchuan* 职官志·名宦傳

⁵⁶ (Ming) Fang Liangyong (明)方良永, *Fan Jianzhai wenji* 方簡肅文集, j. 5. p. 17, *Yihou Lei Juexuan chusi beiji* 邑侯雷覺軒去思碑記

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 17.

⁵⁸ (Ming) Zheng Yue (明)鄭岳, *Shanzhai wenji* 山齋文集, j. 18: 15-16, *Ming feng yidafu Guangxi Guilin tongzhi zhishi Chengxi Huangjun muzhiming* 明奉議大夫廣西桂林同知致仕澄溪黃君墓志銘。

⁵⁹ (Qianlong) *Putian xianzhi* (乾隆) 莆田縣志, j. 4, p. 48, *Jianzhizhi: siguan*, 建置志·寺觀. (1968:168).

worth noticing is that in the late Ming, the Putian scholarly gentry actively participated in the repair and construction of popular god temples, and that the majority of these projects were carried out in the name of setting up a “*shê*”. For example, in the Jiajing period (1522–1566) Zheng Yue 鄭岳, a Gentleman in Waiting in the Ministry of War who returned to his home village after losing the debate over the Ritual Controversy at court, in his spare time left over from repairing irrigation systems and building bridges “visited the ancient ruins of a Buddhist monastery and built up a structure with four pillars, in order to sacrifice to the two gods of the soil and the earth, as well as other gods on the side. The front was made into an entranceway, and in the back we made space for shamanic invokers (spirit mediums). Moreover, we piled up earth and wood to complete the construction of the *shê* (temple). 酒又即佛刹舊址, 為屋四楹, 以祀土、穀二神, 旁祀他神, 前闢為門, 後棲巫祝, 且聚土植木, 而社又成。⁶⁰

This style of god temple merged with a *shê* altar united the ritual system of the god temples with the demands of the *lishê* order, and gradually became the basic model for the popular god temples of Putian. Not long after this, another official forced out of court into retirement by the Great Rites Controversy, the Censor Zhu Zhe 監察御史朱浙, also took part in the repair of the *Yiqi dongshê* 義齊東社. This *lishê* altar had reputedly been rebuilt in Hongwu 2 (1369), and by the Jiajing period (1522–1566), “the old building was propped up (nearly collapsed), and could no longer be termed (adequate for) sacrificial rites 老屋撐支, 弗稱祀典.⁶¹ In fact it had already become a popular god temple. At this time, many other local old temples were gradually restored. Zhu Zhe stated in his *Qiaoxi Shenyu ji* (*Record of the God Temple west of the Bridge*) 橋西神宇記:⁶²

The god temple of Qiaoxi was first called a Hall of the Sage—it was face to face with the *shê* altar of a sub-canton. Elegantly decorated, pure and calm, the molded demon icons were all eerie and bizarre, distant and strange. They were all ancient customs of the barbarian Mongols... In my youth, I studied inside this temple, and so I have a deep memory of it. Later wind and rain knocked it down. In the Zhengde period

⁶⁰ (Ming) Zheng Yue (明)鄭岳, *Puban xingzaobei* 蒲阪興造碑, in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 130, pp. 152–153.

⁶¹ (Ming) Zhu Zhe (明)朱浙, *Chongxiu lisheji* 重修里社記, in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 148, pp. 170–171.

⁶² Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 147, pp. 169–170.

(1506–1521) the District Magistrate Lord Lei Yinglong of Menghua tore down licentious cult temples and got rid of the earthen icons. He kicked down temples, causing them to collapse and sink into an abyss. (At this time) Shadi alone lacked a grand temple. I made a plan with the Supervising Secretary Zhang Bafeng, and we gathered together the collective efforts of the people, and repaired the temple... There was still the Shuiyungong Temple which had been left as a pile of tiles and bricks in a desolate heap for a long time. (This matter) had been delayed and the temple had not yet been restored. Important matters start with people. The reconstruction effort comes from the delight that people feel (for this project), and so it was accomplished with joking and laughter. The funds were contributed by the people, and there was labor to spare, and the work was done at once. We followed the original foundations, and then created new regulations.... Construction began in the fourth lunar month of 1547 and was completed by autumn. Those who managed this work are so and so (listed below).

橋西神宇，初名“聖堂”，與里社相向。華藻靜洁，塑捏鬼物，詭怪離奇，皆胡元舊俗。……余少時讀書其中，故甚記之，向後風雨摧敗。至正德間，知縣蒙化雷侯應龍毀折淫祠，盡去土偶，其趾崩坏，淪為深淵，沙堤大觀於此獨缺。余與給舍張君八峰謀之，假合眾力，重修屋宇。…尚有水雲宮觀，廢為瓦礫丘墟久矣，因循失於恢復。事出於人情之所樂，談笑而成；財捐於眾力之有餘，咄嗟可辦。茲尋舊址，爰拓新規。……經始於丁未四月朔，至秋告成，董其役者則某某也。

Here the date *dingwei* corresponds to Jiajing 26 (1547), only thirty years after Lei Yinglong had carried out his destruction of the illicit shrines. From this we can see that after the destruction of illicit cults of the Zhengde period, the popular god temples of Putian had undergone a very rapid recovery. Not only was this the case, after the mid-Ming the restoration of *lishé* was almost always linked to a popular god temple, and most of these *shé* altars had a god statue (representing the tutelary god). In Wanli 16 (1588), Fang Wanyou 方萬有, a former 工科給事 (Supervising Secretary in the Office for Scrutiny of Works), wrote in his *Xiaoyi lishé chongjian ji* 孝義里社重建記 (*Record of the reconstruction of the Xiaoyi sub-canton shé altar*):⁶³

The Xiaoyi *lishé* altar was formerly in Yujing street to the east of the Xiaoyi quarter. It was established at the beginning of the (Ming) by Adjutant LinYonghe and his followers in the sub-canton. Later it was destroyed by invading troops. In Zhengde *gengxu* (a mistake for *gengwu* 1510 or *gengchen* 1520), Lin's sixth generational descendant Office Manager (Lin) Youheng and Surveillance Commission Officer (Lin) Youshou

⁶³ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 160, pp. 182–183.

bought land to the east in the Kuishan alley and rebuilt the altar. So until this day people refer to the Lin as the patrons (of the altar)... The altar was built in the *gui* position facing east. In the central hall were worshipped the (god of the) earth and the grains, along with various Saintly King gods, while the eastern chamber held the altar of the Immortal Maiden. In Jiajing *renxu* (1562) the temple was destroyed in the fires of battle. After the pirates had retreated, the son of Office Manager (Lin Youheng), Assistant Department Magistrate (Lin) Yangcheng encouraged people to repair the temple. The times were difficult and our strength was limited, so we temporarily lodged the gods. I regularly visited the temple to prostrate myself and pay respects to the gods, and my heart was never at ease, wishing as I did to argue for the reconstruction of the temple, but never quite achieving this goal. In 1587 there was no rain, and the masses all prayed to the gods... That autumn, in the ninth lunar month, a child from a neighboring village was playing in the *shè* temple, when he saw three of the god statues suddenly rise up and stand before him. He told people about this but no one believed him. On the morning of the next day, suddenly there was a strange wind with a thundering sound, and the statue gradually emerged from its reliquary case and nearly lay down on the ground. Everyone found this extremely bizarre and ran to tell me about it... Thereupon we prevailed on Instructor Zhuo Zhongli to be the main guarantor of the oath, with Gao Wen and Peng Sipeng as fund-raisers. Each gathered different amounts of money, and retired government officials especially were pleased to contribute and assist. We met in the early part of the second month. Taiyin Lord Gao-ren, Administration Vice Commissioner Lord Peng Wenzhi, Transport Assistant Lord Lin Yingsheng, and Officer of the Censorate(?) Lord Chen Zuyao, led the outstanding talented people in the sub-canton to carry out the ritual of praying for grain. Then we read out the oath and the prohibitions, and we were very numerous and talented and elegant.

孝義里社故在玉井街孝義坊之東，國初參軍林公用和率里人創建者，後被武夫侵毀。正德庚戌，其六世孫都事公有恒，都憲公有守，購地於其東蔞山巷中徙建焉，以是里人至今稱林氏為檀越主云。社位癸向東，中堂祀土佑、聖王諸神，東偏一室為仙姑壇。嘉靖壬戌，燬於兵燹。寇退，都事子別駕仰成倡眾修葺，時訕力乏，暫以棲神耳。余歲時伏謁，心竊不安，欲議改建，而未之逮也。歲丁亥春暮，不雨，眾盜於社。……是秋九月，有鄰兒游社中，見聖王像恍然竦而立者三，告之人，弗之信。翼日已候，怪風一陣聲轟轟，而像輒傾出龕外，幾卧地。眾咸鵬愕，奔告於予。……迺介文學卓先生中立為主盟，高君文、彭君思鵬募眾，各捐金有差，而縉紳士多樂捐助。……會茲仲月上戊，太尹高公□仞、參政彭公文質、運判林公應騰、憲□陳公祖堯，率諸里雋舉祈穀禮，讀誓誠，濟濟彬彬。

The historical process of the repeated restorations of the Xiaoyi *lishê* all were led by local retired government officials, and all took place

inside of popular god temples. This shows that the sacrificial rituals of the sub-canton *shê* altars of Putian in the late Ming period had already merged effectively with the popular god temple system.

By the Qing dynasty, the sub-canton *shê* altars of Putian had for the most part already transformed into popular god temples. It was difficult to find any survival of the early Ming sub-canton *shê* altar sacrificial rites. But the system of *lishê* sacrifices had not disintegrated, but instead had transformed and expanded within the system of popular god temples. The Qianlong *Putian xianzhi* records:

The *shê* altars of the sub-cantons were originally for the sacrifices to the god of the earth and the grain, but today they all build temples and mix in the sacrifices to other gods. Only Shangyu in Lianjiang, and Qianhuang in Daixianli sub-canton still preserve the open-air altar. As for the six *shê*-altars of Longpo, Xingtai, Yinghui, Tongying in Dongxiang, and Changshou in Zuoxiang, and Huangxiang Taiping in Yanshouli sub-canton, although they have built temples, they still have tablets dedicated to the god of the earth and the grain. Each spring and autumn, after they have gathered the community of the *shê*-altar and made their sacrifices, they read out the proclamation, and repeat the oaths and covenants. They then gather for the wine-drinking ceremony, and so they still preserve the ancient style (of the ritual).

里社壇，本以祀土穀之神，今皆建屋，雜祀他神。惟連江上余、待賢里前黃仍壇。東廂龍坡，興泰、英惠、通應，左廂長壽，延壽里黃巷太平，六社雖建屋，尚立土穀神主，春秋集社眾祭畢，讀誥律、誓約，然後會飲，猶有古之遺風。

The same source also states “As for the *litan* altars to the unrequited dead, each sub-canton followed the order to build them in the Hongwu period to different degrees, and nowadays they are all gone 各里鄉厲壇, 洪武間奉例建置不一, 今俱廢.⁶⁴ This shows that by the Qing the early Ming system of independent *shê*-altars and *li*-altars had disappeared, and that only six or eight places maintained the sacrificial rituals of the *shê*-alter established in the Hongwu period. However, nowadays virtually every village in the Putian plains has a temple with the statues of Zunzhu mingwang 尊主明王 (The Reverent Lord and Brilliant King) and Houtu furen 后土夫人 (Lady Houtu), and every year these temples carry out celebrations on the birthdates of their Lord and Lady of the She 社公, 社媽. This is to say that the worship of

⁶⁴ (Qianlong) *Putian xianzhi* (乾隆) 莆田縣志, j. 3, pp. 26a–27a, *Jianzhizhi: Tamiao* 建置志 · 壇廟. (1968: 128).

the God of the Soil and the Grain has become a common phenomenon within the popular god temples, and that the sacrificial rites of the *lishê* had already been transformed into sacrificial rites of the god temples.⁶⁵ The popular god temples of Putian actually simultaneously maintain the functions of both the sacrifice to the *shê*-altars and the sacrifice to the *litan* altars to the unrequited dead, and so they had completely substituted themselves for these former independent altars.

The *lishê* altars of the early Ming were subordinate to the *Lijia* 里甲 organization, and were under the control of this political administrative order, so the total number of altars must have been limited. In between the level of *li* 里 sub-canton, and the ten family *jia* 甲 units, there was another level in Ming Putian called the *tu* 圖, which were made up of 100 families (like the *Li* elsewhere in China). According to the *Hongzhi Xinghua fuzhi*, there were over 100 *tu* units on the Putian plain, and so at most there should have been an equal number of *shê*-altars set up in that area in the early Ming.⁶⁶ During the mid-Ming, when the *lijia* system was coming apart, the sacrificial rituals of the *lishê* altars also underwent a relatively independent development. Many of the original *shê*-altars gradually sent off branch *shê*-altars, while regions that had not originally had a *shê*-altar began to set them up on their own initiative.⁶⁷ In Jiaqing 18 (1813), the Literati Chen Bilai 陳弼齋 from Dongyang 城郊東陽鄉 to the east of Putian wrote his *Chongjian Haopu lisheji* 重建濠浦里社記 (*Record of the restoration of the Haopu sub-canton shê altar*):⁶⁸

According to the *Book of Rites*, the ritual methods (require) a King to establish a *shê* altar on behalf of all the surnames. This is called the “Great *Shê*”. The feudal lord establishes a *shê* altar on behalf of the hundred surnames, and this is called “the *shê* altar of the country”. An official (aristocrat) establishes a *shê* altar on behalf of the masses below him, and this is called “the *shê* altar of a region”. The “*shê* altar of a region” is what is nowadays known as the *lishê* (the *shê* of the sub-canton, or the village)... Is this not the origin of my own Haopu *shê* altar? When we

⁶⁵ Zheng Zhenman, *Shenmiao jidian yu shequ fazhan moshi: Putian jiangkou pingyuan de lizheng* 神廟祭典與社區發展模式：莆田江口平原的例證, in *Shilin* 史林 (1995.1), pp. 33–47, 111.

⁶⁶ (*Hongzhi*) *Xinghua fuzhi* (弘治) 興化府志, j. 9, 2–12, *Huji: Litukao* 戶紀 · 里圖考.

⁶⁷ Zheng Zhenman, *op. cit. Shilin* 史林 (1991.1), Zheng Zhenman, *Ming Qing Fujian lishê zuzhi de yanbian* 明清福建里社組織的演變 in Zheng and Chen, eds., 2003: 335–353.

⁶⁸ Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 252, pp. 290–291.

investigate the origins of this *shê* altar, we find that it had its beginnings during the Ming Jiajing (1522–1566) period. When I was a child, I heard the elders speak of its history in great detail. From them we know that the god had chased away adversity and driven off disaster showering kindness on the people of this land. This was not a matter of (miracles) of only a single generation. Thus it is reasonable to say that as for the matter of requesting a title from the court and receiving an august title (for the god), all this began at that time with the efforts of the Vice Censor in Chief, the Honorable Shaoqi. The *shê* altar began when the Honorable Shaoqi retired and returned to his village, and chose, through divination, lands to the left of his holdings. Thereupon, together with the Wu lineage of Xizhu, he led the residents of Xuqiao, Xishi, Gouxi and other *jing* (ritual territories) to donate land, gather funds, help with labor, and offer supplies. He united all their efforts to complete (the project). We can conclude that the hearts of people in those days were pure and true, (and that) the strong and the weak did not contrast themselves. They (developed the cooperative spirit of antiquity) in which “eight families collectively farmed their common plot”, and succeeded in generating a custom in which (all had good relations with one another such that) “all the neighboring households each deserved awards”. The Honorable (Shaoqi) compared things with this ideal state and desired to make his community just like that. So at once he united all the gentlemen of the *shê* who greatly delighted in following his (suggestions).

《禮》祭法，王為群姓立社，曰“大社”；諸侯為百姓立社，曰“國社”；大夫以下成群立社，曰“置社”。置社，今里社也。……此我濠浦里社所由昉與？考社之建置，咸謂自明嘉靖始。賚為童子時，聞故老論其軼事甚詳，而知神之捍灾禦患，惠我鄉人者，非一世之積。則謂當日之得請於朝而隆以徽號者，由中丞少淇公之力，理或然也。說者又謂社之興也，自少淇公歸田後，卜地於淇之西，爰與西洙吳氏率徐橋、西施、沟西等境，捐地鳩金，佽工庀材，合眾人之力以成。蓋當時人心淳厚，強弱不形，以八家同井之風，成比戶可封之俗。公欲比而同之，而一時同社諸君子亦靡然樂從之。

Because the Haopu lishê 濠浦里社 sub-canton *shê* altar/temple was first built in the Ming Jiajing period, it lacked a legal foundation, and so Chen Bilai sought to provide a rational interpretation, moving from the sacrificial law set out in the *Book of Rites* to the actions of his ancestors who requested and were awarded an august enfeoffment. Actually, this kind of self-initiated construction of a *shê*-altar became a common phenomenon in the late Ming, and no longer required special explanations. In the same area as the Haopushê one finds the Xizhang Haopushê 西漳濠浦社 which was built in the late Ming. This had formerly been an old temple, which after being restored during

the Wanli period (1573–1620) was renamed as a *shê*.⁶⁹ And this was not all, for inside Putian city there is also a Haopushê 濠浦社, which claims to have been established by a Chen lineage member who moved into the city in the Qing. According to regulations of the Jiaqing 22 (1817) edition of the *Putian Fushan Dongyang Chenshi Zupu* 莆田浮山東陽陳氏族譜:

The Fushou (headsman of good fortune) during the annual *yuanxiao* festivities of the (founding) *shê* must go to the Dongyang (*shê*-altar) in Putian city to collect the (branch) *shê*'s contribution, in order to preserve the significance of the founding *shê* temple.

福首, 每年元宵社事, 須到城東陽收領社金, 以存祖社之意。⁷⁰

Here the *zushê* “祖社” is naturally meant in distinction to the branch *shê* altar set up inside Putian city.

During the late Qing, due to rapidly increasing population and the intensification of minor regional contradictions, a process of *fenshê* 分社 (division of the *shê*) became a common phenomenon, leading to the creation of a new system of god temples, and a new organization of sacrificial worship at the *lishê* altars. For example, in the *Qiushi zupu* (*Qiu lineage genealogy*) of Jiangdong in Huangshi, we find:

It is said that there are prayers in the spring and thanksgiving sacrifices in the fall. From antiquity this has been the constant rule. Sacrificing to the (altar of the) harvest and (assuring) a smooth agricultural cycle, this has been a great rite passed down through the ages. The establishment of a *shê* altar is in order to respect this ancient regulation. From the founding of the Fude dongshê *shê*-altar (until now) has been many years... Already at the 1839 autumn sacrifice it was clear that there were “teaming insects rubbing against the beams” and “quickly arising arguments over insignificant matters” (i.e., small-minded, argumentative people). People’s hearts were no longer (kind and simple) like those of antiquity, and the affairs of the *shê* were sinking and lost. My lineage was offended by what they saw, and sad at heart. We were unwilling to simply let collapse all our earlier efforts. Thereupon in 1840, we gathered the men of our lineage and reconstructed the Fude dongshê. We did not forget the regulations of earlier generations, but developed newly established rules and regulations.

⁶⁹ *Chongjian Xizhang haopushê beiji*, 重建西漳濠浦社碑記, in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 230, p. 265.

⁷⁰ *Putian Fushan dongyang Chenshi zupu*, 莆田浮山東陽陳氏族譜, j. 2, 63, *Jiagui* 家規.

蓋聞春祈秋報，古有常規；祀稷享農，久垂巨典；此立社所以遵古制也。福德東社自建社以來，蓋亦有年矣。……逆料於道光十九年己亥秋祭，有蟻聚揉板之輩，頓生鼠牙雀角之爭，人心不古，社事淪亡。我姓目擊心傷，未甘頓壞前功。爰是道光二十年庚子歲，合族鳩丁，重興福德東社，不譜前人之矩矱，鼎興新立之規條。⁷¹

The Fude dongshê 福德東社 is in fact inside the Jiangdong Pukou Temple 江東浦口宮, which is said to have been first founded in the Song, rebuilt in Ming Wanli 4 (1576) and repeatedly restored in Kangxi 28 (1689), Qianlong 21 (1756), and Jiaqing 16 (1811).⁷² Prior to Daoguang 19 (1839) the sacrificial system of Pukou Temple was made up of a common group of the major lineages, but after this date they divided into different *shê* (ritual associations). According to our survey investigation, the Pukou temple currently has eleven *shê*, including the Fude dongshê of the Qi lineage, 祁氏福德東社, the Fude zhongshê of the Jiang lineage 江姓福德中社, the Fude xishê of the Liu lineage 劉姓福德西社, the Dongli jiashê of the Zheng lineage 鄭姓東里家社, the Yongxing zhongshê of the Wu lineage 吳姓永興中社 as well as the Yongxing houshê 永興後社 and the Shengxing yishê 盛興義社 (also belonging to the Wu lineage), the Yongxing qianshê and Yongxing yishê of the Chen lineage 陳姓永興前社、永興義社. In addition one finds the Xinan shoushê 新安壽社 and the Dongchun shangshê 東春上社, and other similar ritual organizations, made up of a combination of several local minor surname groups. These *lishê* sacrificial organizations with lineages at their basis, clearly gradually formed after the Daoguang period (1821–1850), and so reflect the process of this region's initial division and subsequent reorganization of the *lishê* system. However, currently these various *lishê* organizations, in addition to separately carrying out their own *shê* sacrificial rites, also each year in rotation take on the organization of the birthday rites, celebrations, and processions around the collective boundaries for such local gods as Jianggong zhenren 江公真人 and Zhanggong shengjun 張公聖君, all of which results in a ritual organization with Pukou Temple at its center.

In some areas, the process of (division of *shê*) also took shape of a process of “division into temples”. For example, in the seven village

⁷¹ *Qiushi zupu: shengchen puxu* 祁氏族譜 · 生辰簿序, manuscript, one volume, Putian Danganguan.

⁷² *Chongxiu Pukougong beizhi* 重修浦口宮碑志, in Dean and Zheng, *Epigraphical Materials*, 1995: No. 249, pp. 284–285.

ritual alliance of Goushang in Jiangkou 江口溝上七境, the earliest “founding *shê*” was the Jiaxingshê in Qianmian village 前面村嘉興社, and later it branched off into the Jiaxingdian temple 嘉興殿, and the Guangrenmiao temple 廣仁廟. Then the Jiaxingshê 嘉興社 also divided off into the Xinxingshê 新興社 and the Jifushê 集福社, while the Xinxingshê branched into the Weixianmiao temple of Houku village 後枯村威顯廟, the Weixiandian temple of Licuo village 李厝村威顯殿, the Fuhuitang temple of Xindun village 新墩村福惠堂, and the Yongfutang temple of Tianzhongyang village 田中央村永福堂. Finally, the Jifushê branched into the Guanghuigong temple of Chendun village 陳墩村廣惠宮, the Jiletang temple of Youdun village 游墩村極樂堂, and the Lingxianmiao temple of Xiadun village 下墩村靈顯廟. These later generation branch temples all used the name of their founding *shê*-altar when establishing their own *shê*-altar within their temples. For example, when the Fuhuitang temple of Xindun village 新墩村福惠堂 divided off from the Xinxingshê of Houku village 後枯村新興社 in Jiaqing 10 (1805), it also established a *shê*-altar called the Xinxingshê 新興社.⁷³ After this, one also finds a few temples that were built even more recently, and which have only a temple name and no *shê*-altar within the temple, such as the Longyoutang temple of Xindian village 新店村隆佑堂, the Weixiantang temple of Zheche village 蔗車村威顯堂, and the Jinshangong temple of Houchengpu village 後埕埔村金山宮. In the Goushang seven village ritual alliance, all those villages with both *shê*-altars and temples generally carry out a procession each year during the *yuanxiao* festival around their village boundaries, indicating that they constitute a relatively independent *jing* 境 ritual territory. However, those villages without a *shê* but only a temple, do not have the full qualifications to constitute an independent ritual territory, and as a result they must take part in the processions of other outside villages.⁷⁴

Most of the older *lishê* temples and god temples of the Putian plain have gone through the process of division of the *shê* 分社 or division of temples 分廟, creating different kinds of ritual alliances and temple networks. These are referred to locally as *qijing* 七境, or seven village ritual alliance. In the survey below, we identify 153 different

⁷³ *Fuhuitang xinxing shêzhi* 福惠堂新興社志, Qing manuscript, one volume.

⁷⁴ Zheng Zhenman, “Shenmiao jidian yu shechu fazhan moshi: Putian jiangkou pingyuan de lizheng 神廟祭典與社區發展模式: 莆田江口平原的例證,” in *Shilin* 史林 (1995.1), pp. 33–47, 111.

ritual alliances, of which almost half are known as *qijing*. Generally speaking, the basic characteristic of these *qijing* ritual alliances is that through different levels of sacrificial ritual, they have united a number of lineages or villages, and thus constituted a relatively stable regional organization. Thus we can view these *qijing* as trans-lineage and trans-village social alliances.

During the Ming and Qing, due to the fact that the *lishê* order and the system of god temples came together for various reasons, this led to the ritualization of the local administrative system. In the Putian irrigated plains, only by participating in the *lishê* sacrificial ritual organization could one obtain a legal social status. Only by directing the sacrificial rituals of the *lishê* could one control the system of local power. Because of these reasons, the development of the Ming and Qing *lishê* sacrificial ritual organization reflects in a concentrated form the process of growing local social autonomy and self management.

Conclusions

Prior to the Sui and Tang, the Putian plain was the marshy rim of a deep bay. After the Tang, due to ceaseless reclaiming of land from the sea and the digging of ever more irrigation canals, an intricately irrigated, densely settled coastal plain was formed. In this kind of a local society access to water via irrigation was the most important of environmental resources. In order to control water resources and maintain the irrigation infrastructure, there developed over time many different kinds of irrigation collectives.⁷⁵ The historical organization of the lineages and religious institutions of Putian in fact have many characteristics that are a direct result of these irrigation collectives.

The traditional popular social organizations of Putian were primarily the lineages and the religious organizations. However, in different historical periods and in different regions of social life, the modes of expression and social functions of lineage and religious organization were not the same. Generally speaking, the Tang and Song period was

⁷⁵ Morita Akira 森田明. “Fukkenshō ni okeru suiri kyōdōtai ni tsuite” 福建省における水利共同體について”, in *Rekishigaku kenkyō 歷史學研究 (Historical Research)*, Vol. 261 (1962): 261; Zheng Zhenman, *Ming Qing Fujian yanhai nongtian shuili zhidu yu xiangzu zuzhi* 明清福建沿海農田水利制度與鄉族組織 (The coastal agricultural field irrigation system of Ming Qing Fujian and village-lineage organization), in *Zhongguo shehui jingjishi yanjiu* 中國社會經濟史研究, 1987.3.

the age of the supremacy of Buddhism, and the great lineages regularly relied upon the Buddhist monasteries. In the Yuan and Ming, the lineages gradually began to detach themselves from the monastic system, and developed into the fundamental form of the popular social organization. In the Ming and Qing period, because of the continual expansion of the self-governing powers of the lower levels of society, there developed all kinds of trans-lineage and trans-village alliances, which find their most important expression in the system of local god temples and its ritual organizations.

The development of the Putian lineages and religious organizations after the Tang was restricted and constrained, in the early period by Buddhism, and then by Song and Ming Neo-Confucianism and by the Ming *lishè* regulations. This shows that the Chinese historical ideology of total unity and its political system had a profound impact on regional socio-cultural development. However, local socio-cultural traditions did not on this account break off, rather they continued to absorb outside resources in order to obtain new developmental forces. The historical Putian scholar gentry elite played a major role in the process of regional socio-cultural development. They were always actively responding to changing conditions and historical trends, and attempting to put forward rational appropriations and reforms of orthodox ideology and governmental regulations, in order to forge out of them legal bases for their continual re-construction of regional culture and continual re-invention of traditions. In these ways they pushed forward the development and transformation of forms of regional society and culture. In the study of Putian socio-cultural history, one must pay close attention to the scholarly transmission and social practices of the scholar gentry elite.

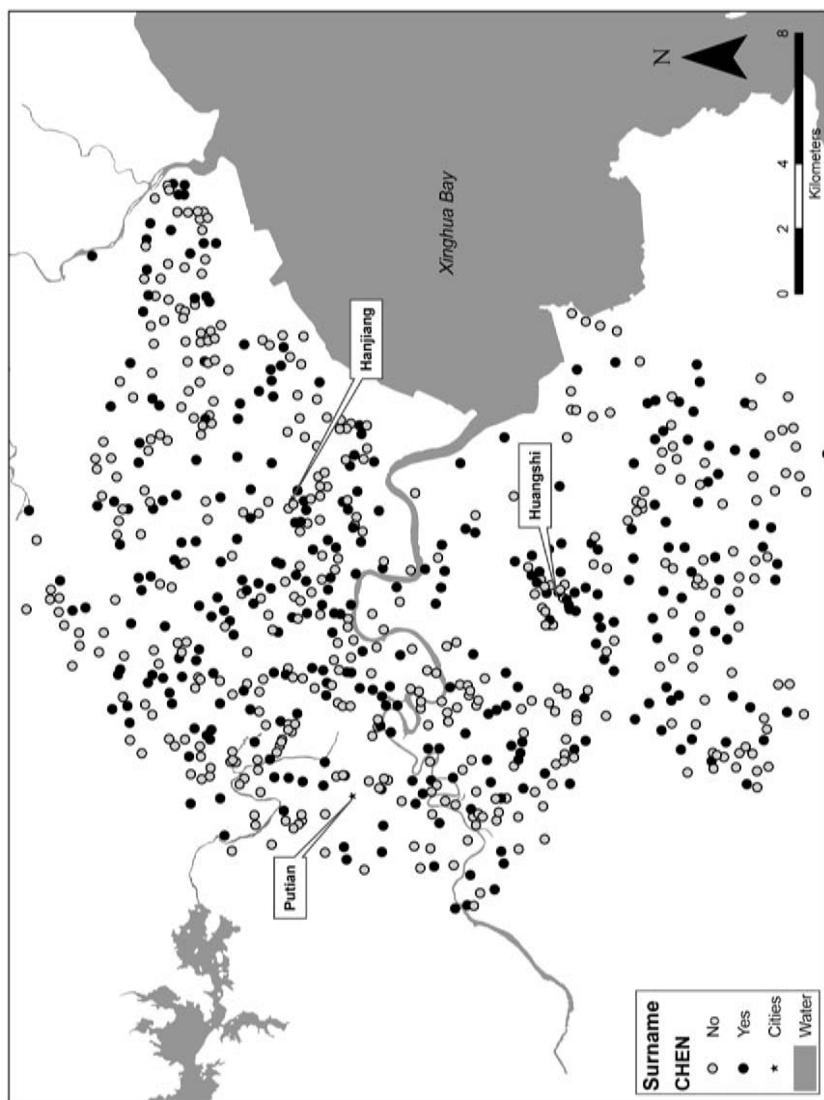
[This essay was first published in *Lishi yu renleixue xuekan* 歷史與人類學學刊 (*History and Anthropology*) 4.1 (2006): 1–28.]

APPENDIX ONE

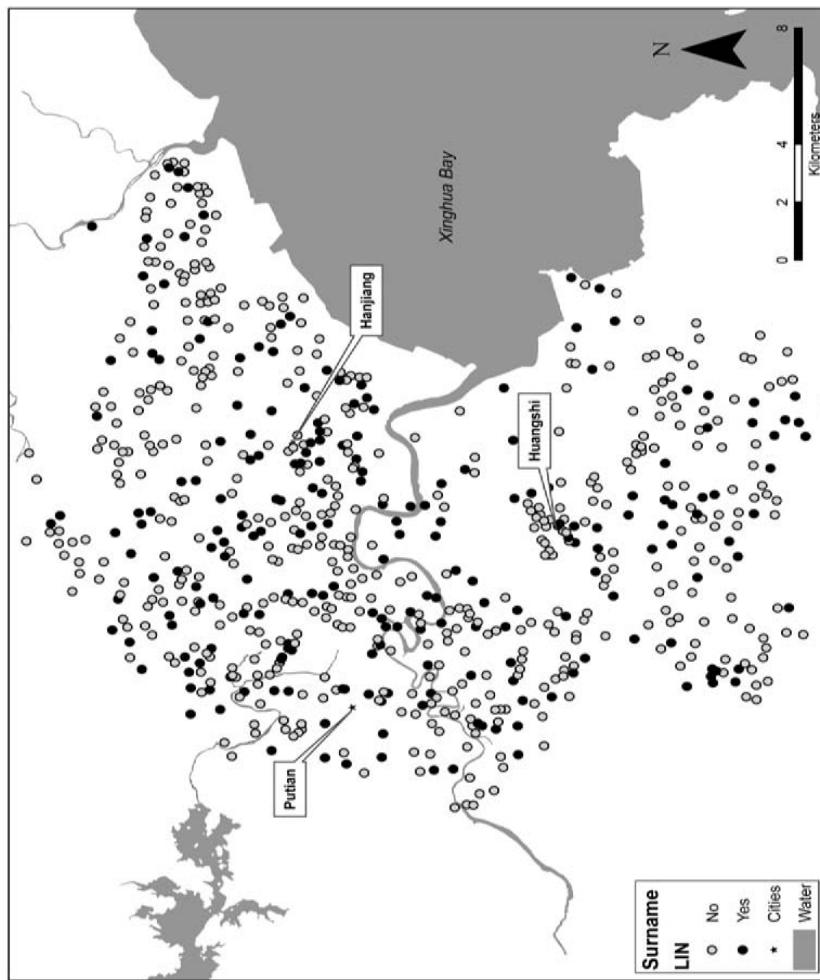
LEGENDS OF THE MAIN SURNAMES OF THE PUTIAN PLAIN (BASED ON THE ACCOUNT IN ZHANG QIN'S *PUTIAN XIANZHI*)

The Chen 陳 were one of the “eight great surnames” who moved to Fujian during the Eastern Jin. In the Tang Wude period Chen Mai 陳邁 served as a Magistrate in Putian. He lived in Citong alley of Putian city 莆田刺桐巷, and had many branches of descendants. The Song Vice Director of the Department of State Affairs Chen Renbi's 陳仁壁 descendants lived near the City God temple in Putian city, and are known as the Lanxiang line 櫳巷派. Chen Junqing's 陳俊卿 descendants are the Yuhu line 玉湖派. Chen Dabian's 陳大卞 third son moved to Fushan 浮山, and started the Fushan line 浮山派. Chen Cui's 陳淬 descendants became the Shoushan line 壽山派. The descendants of the Ming Prime Minister Chen Jun 明尚書陳俊 became the Wenfeng line 文峰派, which is the most numerous of all.

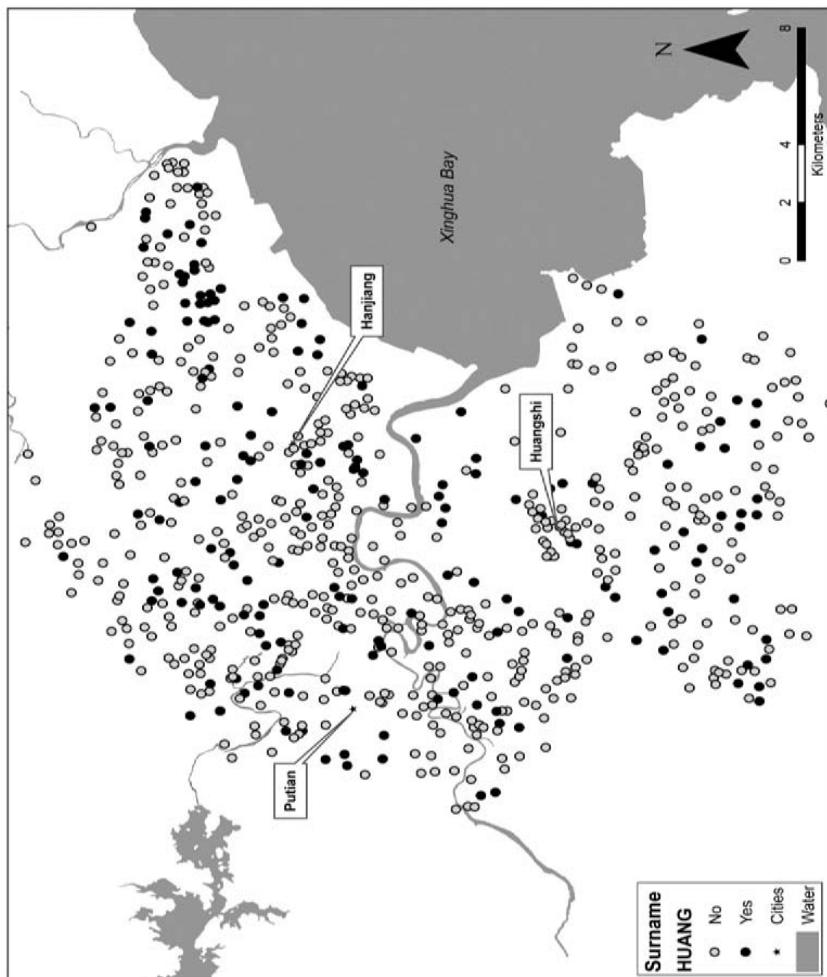
The Lin 林 also moved to Fujian during the Eastern Jin. In the Yongjia period, Lin Lu 林祿 was Prefect of Jinan 晉安太守. He entered Fujian from Xiapi 下邳. In the Tang Tianbao period, his descendant Lin Xuantai 玄泰 moved to Beiluo village in Putian 莆田北螺村, and his three sons were named Lin Tao, Lin Pi, and Lin Chang, 韶披昌. Lin Pi moved to Chengzhu, 澄渚. Lin Tao's grandson Lin Zan, 攢 lived in Yimen, and his descendants moved to Yangcheng 陽城, beneath Wushi mountain 烏石山, where he was honored with a Filial Son Gateway 孝子賜闕, and so this line is known as the Quexia (Gateway) Lin 闕下林. Lin Pi had nine sons 林批九子: 奕、蘊、藻、薦、着、暉、蒙、邁、和 all of them were appointed as *Cishi* 刺史 Prefects of various districts. They are known as the Jiumu Lin 九牧林. Lin Chang's 昌 descendants lived in Changcheng 長城. The Song Prime Minister Lin Shaoshi Yingzi 宋尚書少師英子 lived in Dingzhuang 定莊 (also known as Zhengzhuang 鄭莊), and his line is known as the Jinzi Lin 金紫林. Lin Guangchao moved from Dingzhuang to Zhudun 珠墩. The descendants of these Lin lines are scattered into many village, and many passed the official examinations, enabling the lineage to become extremely powerful.



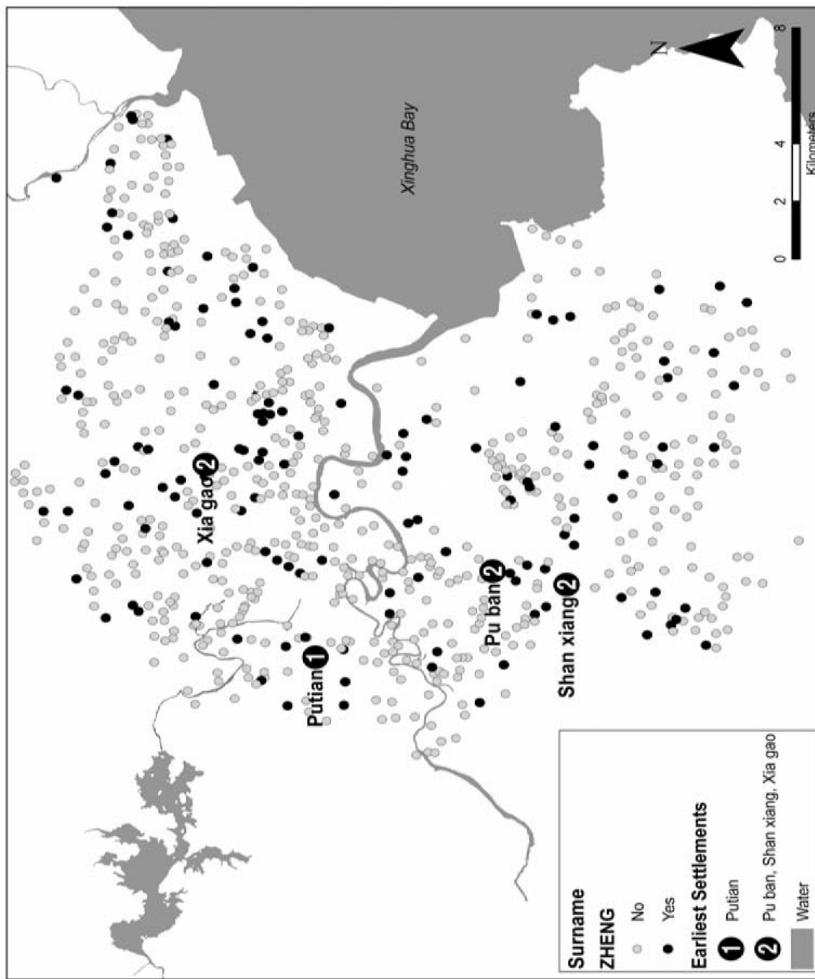
Map 42: Distribution of the Chen surname



Map 43: Distribution of the Lin surname



Map 44: Distribution of the Huang surname



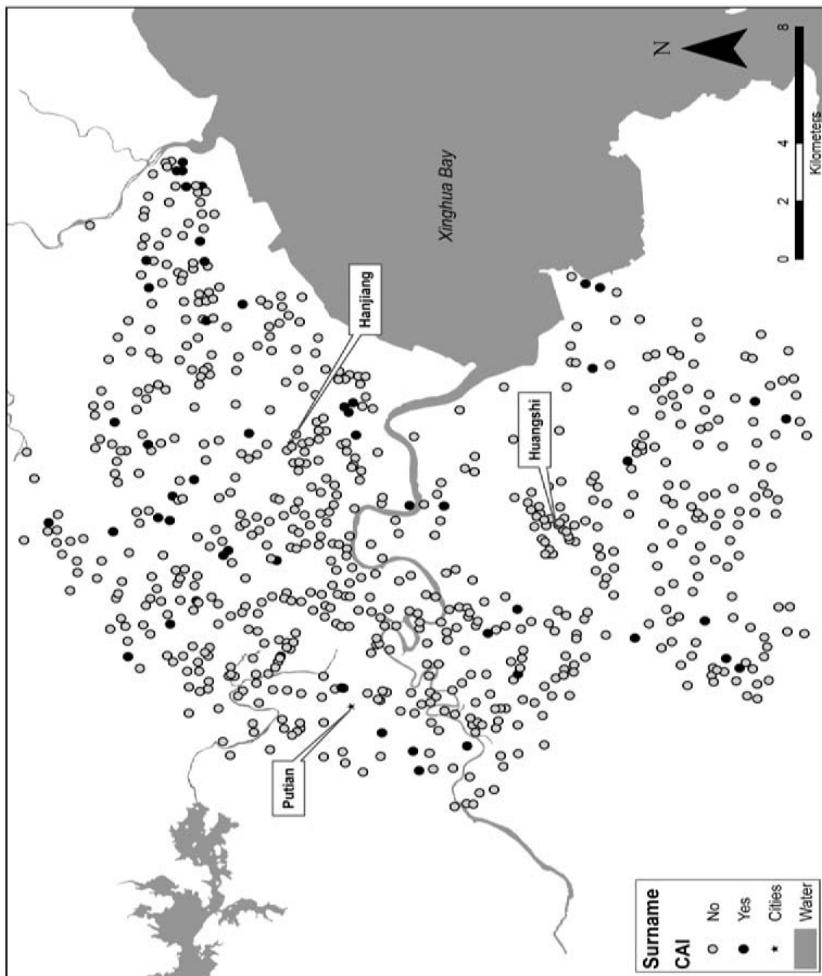
Map 45: Distribution of the Zheng surname

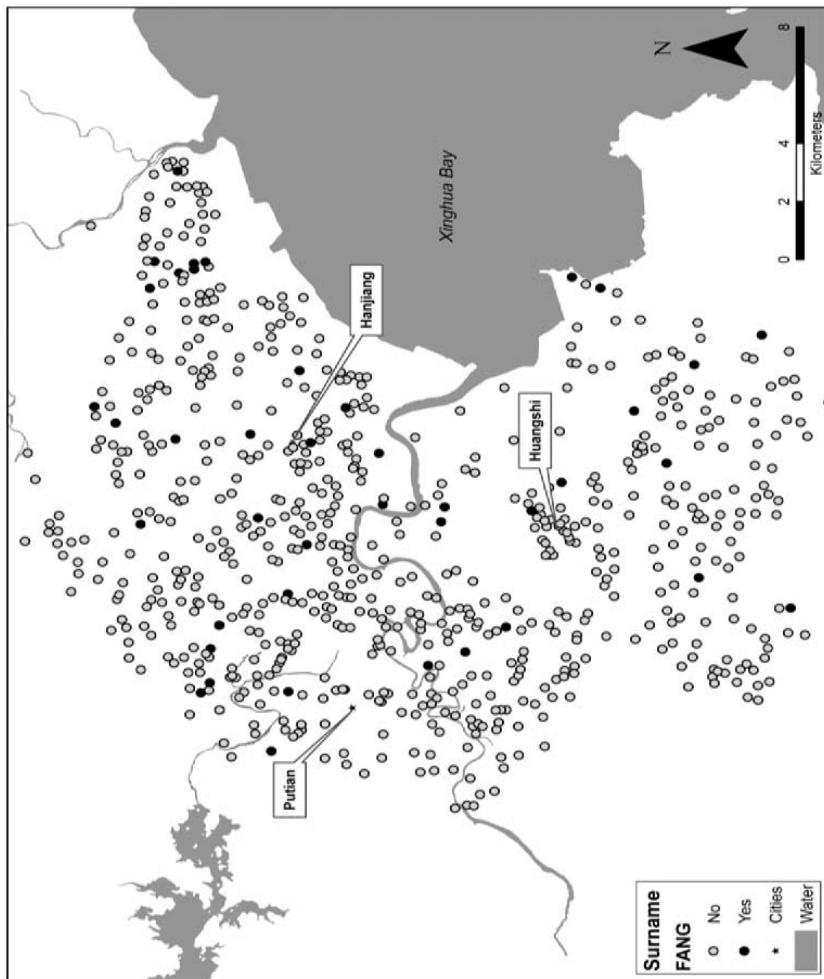
The Huang 黃 of Putian trace their ancestry back to one Huang An 黃岸 who led his family and his retainers from Fuzhou to the Huang-xiang area 黃巷. His sixth generation descendant Huang Tao 滔 was a Censor, who moved to the eastern sub-canton of Putian city 東里. The Huangs produced many examination graduates and their descendants lived close by one another, mostly in Shiting of Jiangkou 江口石庭. Others spread to Baitang Qiangou 白塘前沟 and Gongxi 鞍溪. The Huang of Weizhuang 渭莊 moved to Putian from Quanzhou, but they also trace their ancestry back to Huang An 黃岸.

The Zheng had moved to Fujian by the Eastern Jin, when Zheng Zhao 昭 served as Prefect of Quanzhou 泉州太守. He moved the tombs of his ancestors into the Nanshan mountains 南山 in Putian. During the Sui dynasty, the three brothers Zheng Lu 鄭露, Zheng Zhuang 鄭莊 and Zheng Shu 鄭淑 moved from Yongfu 永福 into Putian, and built a study in the Nanshan mountains 南山. Their descendants often passed the examinations and achieved official positions. They lived together to the north of Putian in Qianhai 前埭 and Houdai 後埭, in Puban 蒲阪, Shanxiang 善鄉 and in Xiagao 下皋. All of these were the descendants of Zheng Lu 露. The others dispersed into many other villages but remained significant surnames groups. Those in Yongtai 永泰 were mainly the descendants of Zheng Shu 淑, while those in Xianyou were mainly the descendants of Zheng Zhuang 鄭莊.

The ancestor of the Wu in Putian, 屯田員外郎吳祭, Wu Ji, followed Wang Shenzhi 王審知 into Fujian during the reign of Tang Xizong, and settled in Putian beneath Huayan 華嚴山 mountain. His nephew Wu Xing 吳興 built the Yanshou Weir 延壽陂 and the dikes along the northern irrigated plains. His descendants lived in Xidu 西都, and the descendants of Wu Ji 祭 moved to Huangshi 黃石, so that the Wu of the northern irrigated plain are mostly Wu Xing's descendants, while those of the southern irrigated plain are mostly Wu Ji's descendants.

The ancestors of the Li of Putian was Li Dan 李丹, a descendant of the Anwang Li who served as the Prefect of Putian in the Xiantong period 咸通莆田令. He lived in Putian, but by the Song Li Fu 李富 was appointed Dianqiandu zhigan 殿前都制幹 and lived in Baitang 白塘村. His descendants lived in Dongtou 洞頭 and Duotou 哆頭 where their lineage was the most powerful one. In the Song, Li Hong 李宏 moved from Houguan 候官 to Putian and built the Mulan Weir 木蘭陂. He died in Putian, and his descendants lived in Beitou 陂頭 where they maintained sacrifices to him. Also in the early Qing, there was a





Map 47: Distribution of the Fang surname

Li ancestor who moved from Anxi 安溪 to Putian and his descendants lived around Tadou 塔兜 near Putian city 塔兜 and also claimed to be the descendants of Li Zhigan 李制幹. Yet another branch of the Li now living in the Hesai and Hanjiang area are the descendants of Li Fu 李富 who moved to Yangwei 洋尾 in Putian.

The Zhang are divided into two distinct lines, the Qujiang 曲江派. and the Baozhu 寶珠派 lines. One group claims descent from the younger brother of the Tang Tianbao period Prime Minister Zhang Jiuling 張九齡, one Zhang Jiugao 九皋, who lived with Jiuling and Jiuzhang 九章 in Qujiang 曲江. Zhang Jiugao's descendant Zhang Mu 張睦 followed Wang Shenzhi 王審知 into Fujian and was made Queyunshi 権運使, settling in Fuzhou Fengchi 福州鳳池. His grandson Zhang Bao 寶 moved from Yongfu Yuezhou 永福月洲 to Hengtang 橫塘 in Putian. In the Ming, a descendant named Zhang Jing 經 served as Jiaoshulang 校書郎, and his descendants lived in Shadi 沙堤, Chiqi 赤岐, Yangdai 洋埭, Qiwei 岐尾, Changji 長基, Mayang 馬洋 and Nanri Island 南日, while the others dispersed into many locations. This is the Qujiang line 曲江派. In the Song, the descendants of Zhang Shijie 張世杰 moved from Zhangzhou 漳州 into Putian and settled in Shali Xiapu 沙里下鋪, Yanshou 延壽 and Yuhu 玉湖 villages. They are the Baozhu line 寶珠派.

The Cai 蔡 claim to have followed Wang Shenzhi into Putian from Gushi in Guangzhou (Henan) 光州固始. They settled in Xianyou. When Cai Xiang was Prime Minister some Cai moved to Caizhai south of Putian city 蔡宅. Many of Cai Xiang's descendants live in Dongsha 東沙 where they are a very powerful lineage. Other Cai descendants live in Jiangkou 江口, Jiaoshang 郊上, Qinhou 沁後, Jiaotou 郊頭, Changtai 常泰 and Guangye 廣業.

The Liu trace their ancestry back to Liu Shao of the Tang 劉韶, a man of Gushi 固始 who is said to have followed Wang Shenzhi 王審知 into Fujian. He was made an official in Quanzhou, but his Administrative Aide Liu Pu 卜 settled in Shaban of Hanjiang 涵江沙阪. His descendants live together in Songban 松阪, Yangzhong 洋中, Xiliu 西劉 and in Putian city.

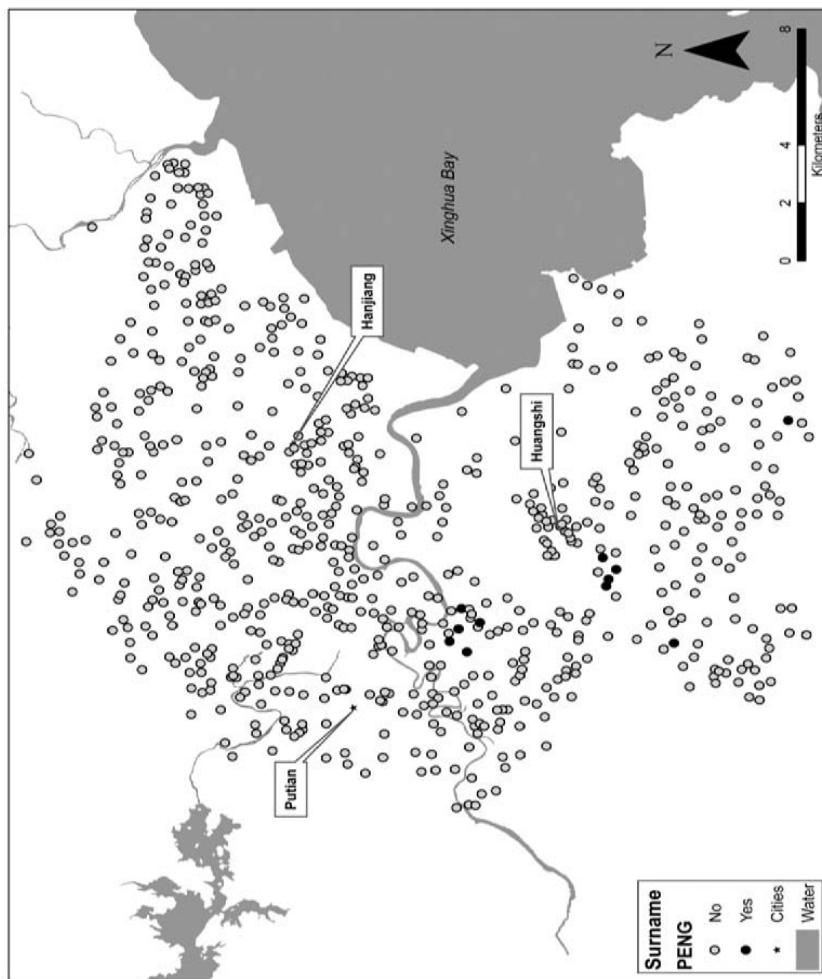
The Weng's first Fujian founding ancestor was Weng Yixuan 翁以軒 who in the late Tang came to Fujian as a Grand Master for Court Audiences. His eldest son Ming He 名何 served as Policy Advisor and lived in Putian. His grandson Weng Chengzan 承贊 excelled at scholarship and obtained his *Jinshi* degree in 896 and was made a Reminder in the Chancellery. He later presided over the enthronement of Wang

Shenzhi 冊封王审知 as King of Min 閩王. Weng Chengcan's two brothers also attained high office, and during the Song, six Weng brothers all obtained the *Jinshi* degree. The descendants of the Weng lived in Qingjiang 清江, Zhenqian 鎮前, Nancheng 南埕, Wengzhuang 翁莊 and to the north of Putian city.

The Fang founding ancestor in Fujian was the Tang dynasty Senior Official with Golden Seal and Purple Sash Fang Yanfan 方延范 who served as the Prefect of Changxi, Gutian and Changle 長溪古田長樂令. Later he moved to Putian, and the region he lived in was named Fangxiang 方巷. During the Song and Ming, his descendants frequently passed examinations and became officials. They lived together in Houtang 後塘 and in Baidu 白杜村. Later they spread out into Xiagao 霞皋, Lupu 蘆浦, and Dongtou 洞頭. They were a powerful lineage. In addition, the Fang of Houdi in Hanjiang 涵江後度 were the descendants of Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺, who moved to Putian and founded their own line of the lineage. The Fang of Baidu were known as the Jinzi Fang 金紫方, and this line includes Fang Jun, Fang Hui, and Fang Shixian 方峻、方會、方士繇. Many Fang moved from Baidu to Baihou 白後. In the Song Fang Cipeng 方次彭 was from this area. The Hanjiang Houdi Fang 涵江後度方 were the descendants of Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺, and they built a Fang lineage Wenchang shrine near the Hanjiang middle school 方氏之文昌祠 which has numerous stone inscriptions.

The Xu trace their ancestors back to Xu Wu 徐務 who served as Prefect of Quzhou 衢州刺史 during the Tang Kaiyuan period. His descendants moved to the Chongren sub-canton of Putian 崇仁里 where they taught Confucian classics. Their disciples were known as the Chongren gaoshi 崇仁高士. His descendant, Xu Yin 徐寅 lived in Yanshou 延壽 and attained his *Jinshi* degree in the Ganning period (894-898). His descendants live in Dongjiao 東角, Beigao 北高, Houtangban 後塘阪 and in Putian city.

The Zeng founding Fujian ancestor was Zeng Yanshi, a Tang Tuanlianshi 團練使曾延世 who came to Fujian from Gushi 固始 and lived in Jinjiang 晉江. His descendants include the Song Prime Minister Zeng Gongliang 宋丞相曾公亮. The grandson of his brother Zeng Ji 曾濟, Zeng Fuchu 曾復初 was Prefect of Xiangshan 香山尹. He was the first to move to Dongpo 東坡 in Putian. Another branch descends from a General Zeng Yanming of the Yuan 帥曾彥明, who also moved to Putian (to Shicheng 石城) from the Quanzhou area. The Zhigui



Map 48: Distribution of the Peng surname

Zeng lineage 直奎曾姓 moved to Putian from Jinjiang in the early Qing.

The Guo of Putian claim to descend from Guo Ziyi of the Tang 郭子儀, They moved from Gushi into Xianyou, and in the Song moved into Weitang in Putian 魏塘, where they formed a large lineage. The Ming Prime Minister Guo Yingpin 明尚書郭應聘 moved from Donghua 東華 into Putian city. In the Qing, the ancestor of Guo Shangxian of Yanwei 延慰郭尚先 moved from Nanji 南箕 into Putian. There are Guo surname groups in Xiatianwei 西天尾, Houzhuo 後卓 and Xiaduwei 下度尾.

The Zhu trace their ancestry back to the Prime Minister Zhu Jingze 朱敬則 of the Tang Wuhou period. His descendant became the Vice Prefect of Yuanzhou 袁州司馬 and was (later) stationed in Fujian. His descendant Zhu Ji 朱玑 was Prefect of Gutian 古田令. His descendants moved into Linjing of Shuinan (Huangshi) 水南琳井 and refer to themselves as the Gutian line 古田派. A cousin of Zhu Ji, Director of the Criminal Administration Bureau Zhu Zhongqiu 都官郎中 (王+丑) moved from Dangtian in Xianyou into Putian where he was overseer of the Shifu Granary 石阜倉. This line is therefore known as the Shifu line 石阜派. The Ming Censor Zhu Ze 明禦史朱淵 was a descendant of the Shifu line, while the Grand Academician Zhu Jizuo 大學士朱繼祚 was a descendant of the Gutian line.

Xu Pugan 許輔幹 was Prefect of Quanzhou in the Tang. He settled in Putian, and his son Xu Ji 許稷 obtained his *Jinshi* degree in 789. His descendants lived together in Wusheng li sub-canton 武盛里, in Xucuo 許厝, Dongqiao 東嶠, Wenli 文里, Houshan 後山, Houdongpo 後東坡, Xinxingli 新興里 and Houfeng 後楓.

Wang Shenzhi 王審知 moved into Putian from Gushi 固始 and became the King of Min 閩王. His cousin's grandson 侃 moved to Fushan in Putian 鬼山, and his descendants lived together in Qianwang 前王. Another line descends from the Court of Judicial Review Case Reviewer Wang Baolong 大理寺評事王保隆, a sixth generation grandson of Wang Shenzhi who served as Putian Magistrate in the Tianyou period. He had the Yongfeng Reservoir dug to extend irrigation 永豐塘 and later settled in Wangzhuang village on Hugong mountain in Putian 蒲壺公主豐村. His descendants lived in Putian city, Chongxi in Hanjiang, 涵江沖溪 Shanmei 山美, Gengyuan 耕原, Gaojiang 告江, Gengba 耕霸 and Loutou 漏頭.

The Zhou 周 also claim to have had an ancestor who followed Wang Shenzhi into Fujian. In the Song, the Grand Master for Court Service Zhou Ren 朝奉大夫周仁 moved to Putian and settled in Qingjiang 清江. His descendants also lived in Xiaban 下阪, Xiadai 下埭 and in Putian city.

The Yao claim to descend from the Tang shiba xueshi Yao Silian 唐十八學士姚思廉. Yao Tianming 姚天明 served as Magistrate of Houguan district 候官縣 and lived in Fuqing 福清韶溪. In the Yuan Gentleman for Managing Affairs Yao Xi 元承事郎姚喜 moved to Changshan in Putian 暢山. Yao Wenzho 姚文照 obtained his *Jinshi* degree in 1523 and was made Provincial Administration Commissioner for Zhejiang 浙江布政使. His descendants are the Changshan line 暢山派. The second son of Yao Tianming 天明, Yao Huang 姚凰 moved to Shepu 畜舖 in Putian. In the Ming, Yao Mingluan 姚鳴鸞 and Yao Minghuang 姚鳴凰 both served as Censors 禦史. This is the Nipo line 露坡派. The third son of Yao Tianming 天明, Yao Feng 峰 served as Commander in Chief of Yanzhou 延州都督, and later moved to Youyang 游洋 in Putian. His descendants moved to Chongqin 沖沁 and became the Chongqin line 沖沁派. Other groups of Yao moved to Putian city, Jiaoxia 郊下 and Dongyuan 東源.

The Yang trace their ancestry back to Yang Yingshi 楊盈世 who served as Defense Commissioner 防禦史 in the Tang and lived in Gushi 光州固始, from whence he followed Wang Shenzhi into Fujian. Initially he lived in Futang 福唐 and later moved to Yanghanzi 楊山子 in Putian. His descendants live in Putian city, in Changtai 常泰, Guangye 廣業, Talin 塔林, Huating 華亭, Wushan 烏山, Luxi 蘆溪, and Chixishan 赤溪山.

A final map shows the distribution of the Peng surname group, primarily south of the Mulan river, near the home village of Peng Shao, where an ancestral hall dedicated to him can be found. Other Peng live near Huangshi.

APPENDIX TWO

A RECENTLY CARVED STONE INSCRIPTION FROM SHITING, PUTIAN

“A Glorious Past” (2006)

(A 30 ft x 6 ft long, black marble stele, with gilded Chinese characters, set sideways in the wall of a side hall at the Zhiyuantang Temple in Shiting, Putian)

The Hall of Devotion to the Primordial has a history which stretches through four dynasties. The temple is like a boat on the sea, which sometimes rises and sometimes falls in accordance with the prevailing winds of the times, flourishing and diminishing in turn. Yet the powers of the gods are limitless and they always find ways to empower so many good men and trustworthy women, both within the land and overseas, to show their concern and love and protect them. (These people) performed such heart warming acts, exhausting their hearts and energies both before the cart and after the horse, selflessly offering their efforts. Their deeds will not be itemized one by one below, but the gods keep a close account of these deeds as closely as they observe the autumn hairs, and each and every one is recorded in the registers of merit. Their acts, which could be put into song or verse, will last throughout the ages.

The Fu(qing), Pu(tian) and Xian(you) Zhiyuantang (Hall of Willing the Primordial) is a combinatory style temple with the worship of the Lord of the Three in One at its center. The Lord of the Teachings is the Ming philosopher from Putian Lin Zhao'en (1519–1597) who propounded his teachings during the 30th year of the Jiajing reign period of Ming Shizong (1551), over 400 years ago.

During the Wanli reign period of the Ming (1573–1620), the Three in One adherents Huang Zonglu, Shi Xia, Huang Boqi and others built the Zhiyuantang in Shiting, behind Huangcuo. The Qing policy of coastal evacuations led to an unprecedented economic disaster for the common people. Nine homes out of ten were abandoned (in this area). After undergoing over one hundred years of unbelievable transformations, the ravages of wind and rain, and long periods of

disrepair, brought the temple to the brink of collapse. Then the temple underwent several cycles of restoration and decline, until in Guangxu 8 (1882) the Three in One adherent Xu Junfu, Huang Junjie and others divined a new location, and moved and rebuilt the temple on the north side of the Fuzhou-Xiamen highway in Shiting. This place is locally known as Dingdian. The carved pillars and painted beams and the golden icons were magnificent and without comparison. Corridors linked to side chambers, which surrounded the main hall of the temple. The “tails” of the raised corners and the rising eaves of the buildings matched one another. The bluegreen willows competed with the leaves of the banana plants in showing off the beauty of their dancing. The wind chimes hanging from the eaves competed in singing with the sounding lions on the walls of the compound. Within the precious hall colorful flowers were arrayed and sandalwood incense in the bronze incense burners filled the air. An endless stream of worshippers sincerely bowed before the altar. This was a fine sacred site of the followers of the Dao, whose scenery would rival those in the *Book of Songs* and the *Book of Documents*.

The sun rose and the moon waned, the Big Dipper traversed the sky and the stars circled year after year until the 30th year of the Republican period, 1941, which was the difficult period of the Anti-Japanese war. That year there was also a rare spring drought and the riverbeds of the great river all split open like cracked lips, bringing hardship and suffering. The common people had little clothing and less grain, “piling frost on top of snow”. They stared longingly at the rice seedlings that could not be transplanted. The hot poisonous sun shone unfeelingly on their bitter faces, all covered with wrinkles. The Initiates (of the Three in One) with burning hearts all day prayed before the thrones of the gods. The pitiful cries of “please save the common people and sprinkle a rain” filled the temple courtyard. Finally there was a response. On morning in the second half of the third month an Initiate discovered that the golden sedan chair of the Jindougong god had moved forward by over a foot (on its own). Everyone found this exceptionally strange, so they burned incense and requested communication via spirit writing. The god replied that he wished to be taken out to pray for rain. People just did not understand. There were no clouds at all in the heavens, and in the past several days many brother temples had taken their gods out to pray for rain without getting a drop of rain in response. If we too took our god out without getting any rain this would be a great loss of face. Nonetheless, the god’s medium

again indicated that if there were was a crow that cawed three times to the east at the *mao* hour (5–7 AM) the next day, then they should immediately carry the god out of the temple. The next day all these signs took place. Thereupon they invited the Military Official Huang Tianyou to wear sackcloth and dress himself as a filial sons in mourning. The initiates all wore white clothes and trousers. They invited (the gods) Lord Xu and the Lord Jindou and the other revered god statues to leave the temple. At around 8 in the morning, the praying for rain procession set out in an orderly and solemn fashion. All along the route one heard the sound of bells and drums and the shouts of those begging for rain, which went on and on without end. The procession passed the Mingde Hall (of Bright Virtue), commonly known as the Caiwu Buddhist Monastery. They stopped at the Lord Zhang Cavern in the Zhongjing streambed. At the gods instruction they entered the cavern to collect water. (The god indicated that) if there were three small fish found in the water, then rain would come. The Initiates went into the cave for about forty or fifty lengths, and finally came upon a small pool of water. Using a basin in the complete darkness they simply filled it up with water. When they emerged the first thing they saw were three small fish swimming (in the basin). It is said that a deaf dragon sleeps in the cave. Only if you wake it up will it rise up to heaven and distribute the rain with the clouds. So the young people climbed to the highest point (on the mountainside above the cave) and pushed loose a great boulder which rolled down the hill. The elders struck gongs and drums in front of the cave. The sound of the rolling boulder as it crashed down the hill, the sound of the gongs and the drums, and the echoes of the mountains startled the heavens and moving the earth. Finally they aroused the deaf dragon. At around ten in the morning the skies were empty and clear for a myriad miles. Suddenly, from behind the mountain, a black cloud rose into the sky. Gradually it grew larger and expanded in every direction. A gust of cold air blew from the mountain side, closely followed by peals of thunder and bolts of lightning. Raindrops the size of soybeans were scattered by the wind. The praying for rain procession circled around from east to west through the downpour, moving slowly as they went. As they processed, they used sprigs of pine to sprinkle water from the mountain cave on the ground. The multitudes along their path were soaked in rain as they took off their red clothes and removed their bamboo hats to kneel and worship without end. Wherever the procession went the sweet rain followed. At that time their only worry

was that the clay icons would be soaked and damaged by the rain, so at around 6 in the afternoon they returned to the temple. Not long after the great downpour stopped. The rain had already filled up the irrigation canals and soaked the paddy fields. The miraculous powers of the god were set into stone through many people's accounts. To this day in the hearts of old people this memory is still fresh in their minds.

In a flash, two years quickly passed by. At mid-autumn, continuous downpours caused the dikes of Houcuo in Jiangkou to burst. The vast floodwaters swamped all the cultivable lands of the Jiuliyang irrigated plain, forcing the chickens and ducks onto the rooftops, and causing coffins to crash into the doorways of homes. After the floodwaters receded, there was a terrible outbreak of bubonic plague, which swiftly afflicted the poor people who lived in a land of deep waters and hot weather. The Initiates took the relieving of suffering and adversity as their own vocation. Following the indication of the gods, they gathered wild herbs and medicinal plants and used these to heal many sick people. At the time, crowds of people came and went, seeking blessings or escape from plague and illness or repaying vows and thanking the gods. Truly this was a matter of spiraling clouds of incense and endless explosions of firecrackers.

In 1947 the Initiate Huang Yaxin and others, who were sojourning in Malaysia, wished to worship the Lord of the Teachings day and night, and to continue the propagation of the combining into one of the Three Teachings of Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism. They respectfully followed the clear maxims, and took the three bounds and the five constants as their daily practice. On entering (their homes) they were filial, and when exiting they displayed respect (for their elders). They treated the pathways of scholar, farmer, worker, and merchant as their standard occupations. They pursued these teachings in their homes and carried them out throughout the world. They promoted the beautiful Chinese virtues of delighting in good works and continuous charity. They thereupon took the incense of the ancestral Zhiyuantang Temple and (used it as the basis for) building a Three Teachings Hall Zhiyuantang Temple in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia. Later, as passenger ships shuttled back and forth like shuttles on a loom, the incense fire of the Zhiyuantang became more and more expansive.

Light and dark fly like an arrow, and the sun and moon are like shuttles on a loom. After Liberation, the great tide of destruction of superstition gathered speed and circled about. All the sincere (religious) affairs of the entire country immediately came to a stop. Even

the Zhiyuantang could not avoid this fate. In 1964 the Socialist Education Campaign rolled over the entire country. In the wake of the expelling of the Buddhist monks and the burning of their scriptures, the shattering of god statues, and the campaign to annihilate superstitious (beliefs), all the movable and even the immovable property inside the Hall was crushed into sweet potato powder, and the temple gradually was reduced into a wasteland, providing the eye with a vision of sorrow and desolation. Then things got even worse during the ten year apocalypse (kalpa, i.e. the Cultural Revolution). During the campaigns to "Destroy the Four Olds and Build up the Four New", the Zhiyuantang Temple went from being real (temple) to a site that had lost all trace of having once been a temple. But the radiant supernatural gods had already left a glowing trace within the hearts of the faithful multitudes.

In 1979 after the dispelling of the chaos and the return to the orthodox, there was a restoration of the policy of complete religious freedom. The many Initiates recommended continuing the incense fire (of the temple). In 1980 the Singapore sojourners, including believers Huang Qiugui and Huang Wenli, and the Malaysian Initiate Huang Yaxin, etc., returned frequently to their homeland. They recommended the rebuilding of the temple. After extensive investigations, it was finally decided to select a site in the Xiadu section of the Shidong village of Shiting. The temple committee, with Altar Master Huang Huarong of Xinxing at the lead, was elected to take charge of the reconstruction. On the 4th day of the 3rd [lunar] month of 1983,¹ they began the full scale construction project. The masses pressed forward, sincerely offering contributions of cash or labor. Their hearts were sincere. But in the course of the construction the economics of the project hit a snag. Even after extensive debates the intense worries could not be resolved. Then the believer Huang Qiugui heard about this, and generously opened up his savings and donated 13,000 RMB to the Zhiyuantang Temple, thereby assuaging the burning worries over the project by his standing firm like a rock in midstream. This ensured the smooth construction of the main hall, which reached its initial completion. On the 13th day of the 11th lunar month of 1986 the consecration rites were held. And on the 15th day the first *chijie* (closing of the temple doors to receive the prohibitions—a spirit medium training

¹ Note that dates are given according to the lunar calendar.

session) was held with the (mediums) entering the inner altar. Subsequently, on 26th day of the 11th lunar month of 1987 the second *chijie* (training session) was held, and on the fourth day of the eleventh lunar month of 1988 the third *chijie* (training session) was held, and the Daoist rites of *yuxiu* (preparation for immortality) were also conducted at that time. Then right away, with the speed of sounding gongs and beating drums, they began planning the construction of the front hall of the temple. The groundbreaking rite was held in 1991. After much hard work they obtained the support and help of good men and trustworthy women from Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao, as well as local people. The building of the front hall of the temple went as smoothly as flowing water. In the 4th lunar month of 1993, the Indonesian adherent, Madame Chen Guan Meiying, together with her entire family, contributed a pair of cloud piercing wooden flag posts, which were erected in front of the temple, displaying four colored embroidered banners which fluttered in the colored smoke of auspicious incense. A believer from Dong'ao in Fuqing, Chen Guocheng, reverently offered a hundred meter long marble slab for the Zhiyuantang temple road. The Indonesian Huang Meiying and her family reverently contributed an open air opera stage. Another foreign compatriot donated a "Xiadu" Bridge (over the Aurora Mist) and a second open air stage. These projects were completed one after another. On the eighth day of the eighth lunar month of 1993 the consecration rites were held for the front hall. On the 14th day of the month, another *Chijie* (spirit medium training) was held and the altar was closed off (for the trainings). With the support and personal attendance of the leaders of the Provincial Bureau of Religious Affairs, on 10th day of the nineth lunar month of 1994, the first Putian City-wide Daoist [Association] Committee was set up, together with an exhibition of calligraphy and paintings.

In order to commemorate the memory of those who had gloriously sacrificed themselves during the War of Liberation, and to deliver a number of men and women who had died unnatural deaths, in accordance with the intense demand of the great mass of believers, on the 24th day of the eleventh lunar month of 1994, with the financial support of overseas and local believers and with the heartfelt assistance of [Three in One] Initiates from brother temples, a three day long, large-scale Mulian Requiem ritual was held. With the sounding of cymbals by the Buddhist monks and Daoist priests, the rites were conducted. Couplets reading "Seek not pardon if you are poor, nor feel pride if

you are wealthy: if each in accordance with his lot acts faithfully, all shall complete the Way of the Buddha"; or "Fathers spoke of tenderness and children spoke of filiality, producing a heavenly harmoniousness in their homes", were pasted upon the Mulian stage. The Great God who Fixes the Stage (Tiangong yuanshuai?) waved his hands and nodded his head, as though he was repeatedly admonishing the people of the world to perform more good deeds and do less evil acts. The candles within the House of Ghosts flickered as though whispering to people about their inner resentments and unhappiness. Wave after wave of clashing cymbals accompanied the sound of Sanskrit chanting as prayers were made for the prosperity of the nation and the health of the people and for eternal peace. Finally, with the sounding of the immortal's songs of the requiem service and the explosions of fireworks, the Mulian ritual sacraments were completed. This realized the dreams of many people over many years for the repayment of their vows.

Spring passed and autumn came, and in 1997 after receiving indications (from the gods) on the 4th day of the 8th lunar month, the fifth *chijie* ritual of upholding the prohibitions (spirit medium training session) began in a tumultuous chorus of sounds. Those who participated in the *chijie* rite included people who reside overseas as well as honored guests and friends of the Dao from other regions. They all harbor a burning hot patriotic love for their country and a sincere heart. They took precious time away to return to their homeland to complete a pilgrimage and to witness the proceedings. The "moving palace" on the eastern stage, carefully designed and exquisitely decorated by the temple managers of brother temples, was as resplendent and awesome as a palace-temple. Its grandeur inspired respect, which arose from peoples' deepest feelings. On the 6th day of the month, in the "moving palace", the ritual of opening up the Yamen Headquarters of the gods, prior to the Tour of Inspection, was carried out. In the morning and the evening, the Official of the Banquet (equivalent to a Lisheng, Confucian Master of Rites) called the hall to order and later dismissed the assembly, surrounded by the shouts and songs of the *Baban* (Eight Guards). The *Chijie* (spirit medium training) rites lasted for nine days, and concluded at the *mao* hour (5–7 AM) on the 13th, to the contesting sounds of booming ritual firework-guns and the clashing of drums and gongs, along with the simultaneous playing of songs and music and the sounding of immortal tunes, and the flashing colors of exploding of bamboo tubes and colorful fireworks. The gates of the

Inner Altar were opened and the mass of Initiates, led by the spirit medium lads, in an orderly fashion, each in their place, holding flags in their hands, strode out of the Altar gates, and worshipped at the entranceway to the temple. At 8 AM, the procession advanced, led by a motorcycle troupe. The (all-female) drum-cart cymbal troupes of each village, eight-instrument troupes, palace-music bands, the ten-sounds musical troupes, and decorated floats enacting stories from the Tang, Song, Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties opened the way. The General's Cannon, the Messengers who race the Documents, the Officials who carry the Banners, those who sweep the streets as they go, and those who follow carrying incense, those who rode on horseback, and those who walked along, each carried out and completed their assigned task. The Great Banner, the Wenchang Banner, the Dragon and Tiger Banners, the Ten Dipper Stars of the Five Directions banners, the Colored Banners, the Incense tower, the Twelve Taibao, the spirit-ponies and their horse-keepers, the "Ten Punishments for Ten Evil Deeds" troupes who urge the people to do more good deeds and less evil acts, the Baban (Eight Temple Guards), the Incense Lads dressed in black and yellow, the Eight Arhat Palanquin, and the Carved Palanquin passed by with powerful, swaying steps, in an endless and magnificent procession stretching out over four *li* long. Drums and gongs shook the heavens, Immortal tunes were resonant. The places they passed surrounded them in clouds of incense and the explosions of Ritual firework-guns—(creating) an entire landscape of Ascendant Peace. At around 6 in the afternoon, the palanquin bearer youths came rushing up and ran back into the temple. The great procession, which the masses had been waiting for in their hearts for many decades, had finally been accomplished.

In the early 4th intercalary lunar month of 2001, the first Altar Master Huang Huarong passed away. With the agreement of the entire group of the followers of the teachings and the approval of the gods, an elder of the Altar, Huang Yulin, a man of great virtue and vision, was unanimously selected to be the Second Altar Master. He also managed the reconstruction of the back hall where the altar beneath the statues was too low. The gods revealed through divination that on the 20th day of the 8th lunar month the groundbreaking rites should be held. Carefully selected timbers replaced the concrete beams, and new pillars were set up. Carved dragons and phoenixes were placed on top of the beams, and were painted with gold leaf and red paint. The

interior of the hall was completely transformed and made new. On the 15th day of the 7th lunar month of 2002, a ritual of consecration and “entering the hall” was held to commemorate the completion of the work. Before the smoke of the donated ritual firework-guns had cleared away, the gods revealed that they had divined the auspicious date for the sixth *chijie* rite (of spirit-medium training). Preparations began, and with the desire of good men and faithful women overseas and locally to do good deeds and to broadly plant merit in the land of blessing, on the 13th day of the 11th lunar month of 2002, at the *shen* hour (3–5 PM), accompanied by a string of elegant songs of the immortals, cloud-sending sounding drums and gongs, and the thunder of exploding ritual fireworks, the Gates of the Altar were closed. Multi-colored banners and red lanterns were lined up to greet the guests to the ritual. Colored lanterns and neon lights flickered their beautiful good wishes and profound blessings to the faithful masses. After the conclusion of the *Jiao* ritual, as fast as rapidly beating gongs and drums, plans were laid for the (construction of the) Hall of the Limitless. In the beginning of the 2nd lunar month of 2003, the groundbreaking was done for the Hall of the Limitless. Goodhearted and trustworthy believers, who sincerely sought to generate good fortune, gathered together many small contributions (into an adequate sum), and put their minds together to great purpose, (and thus) finally a temple hall brilliant without compare was completed. (It had) golden shining gods, murals that seemed about to come to life, delicate and multivarious carvings, and marvelous, heavenly paintwork. The hall and its corridors adjoined one another, and the corridors connected to the bell tower. Green dragons dive across from each other, and facing pairs of colored phoenixes dance in unison. The beauty of the temple is resplendent and the ornamentation is balanced and orderly, the stones are set like a chessboard and the exotic flowers and rare plants are lovely. How beautiful, how striking! The incense smoke constantly swirls, it seems that people walk into a land of the immortals. On the 8th day of the 11th lunar month of 2004 the consecration of the temple was held. At the *mao* hour (5–7 AM) the heavens were clear and a gentle breeze blew. The auspicious incense smoke of two massive bonfires reaching to the sky, and billowed into clouds around the statues of the gods. To the sound of gongs, drums, and fireworks, and the chanting of the Daoist ritual masters, solemnly and in an orderly fashion, the wisdom eyes of the god statues were opened (by dotting

their pupils). On the 19th, with the sending off of honored guests, the great task (of the construction) of the Hall of the Limitless was successfully completed.

After the initial sounding of the bells of 2005, the Altar Master Huang Yulin again set in motion plans (for expansion of the temple). In the 1st month groundbreaking began at the site of the western Drum Tower. A battering of wind and rain had already soaked the pair of wooden flagpoles, and they were tottering and threatening to collapse. The gods revealed that on the 8th day of the 5th lunar month, in accordance with their earlier indicated time, on the site of a small irrigation canal outside the walls of the temple compound, ground-breaking should commence. On an auspicious hour on the 2nd day of the 10th lunar month, a set of Tianshan red stone slabs, in three sections each, standing 16 meters high, were erected into a pair of towering, awesome flagpoles in front of the temple compound. The Duke of the Wind retracted his great fans, and the Goddess of the Clouds let down her vast sleeves. One saw only an auspicious cloud rising alongside the flagpoles. The colored cloud floated lightly between the pillars and then passed by, providing a highly auspicious image. (Construction work on) the Western Drum tower and the old alter hall went on busily, but in an orderly fashion. With the fervent help of overseas and local good-hearted and trusting supporters, under the careful direction of skilled stonemasons, carpenters, carvers, painters and builders, in the 6th lunar month of 2006 the entire building cluster was completed. Shining back and forth and reflecting the beauty of the temple compound on the east side, this cluster of ancient style buildings completed the pair of Bell and Drum Towers, which then became a pair of loyal guardians protecting the two sides of the temple complex. These winged corners are like hands raised in sincere and respectful greeting to visiting incense worshippers. At any time one's ears can be delighted by the auspicious news carried by the happy swallows (in these towers).

光輝的歷程 序言

歷經四個朝代的福莆仙志元堂，猶如海上行舟，時起時伏，隨著時勢而旺盛、衰落。然而神法無邊，總能差遣許許多多海內外善男信女去開心地愛護她，並作出了許多感人肺腑的事迹，盡心竭力地

在鞍前馬後默默無私奉獻著。在這就不一一表列芳名。然神明時刻監察秋毫，一一註冊臻添功德。他們所做如歌般的業迹將名垂千古。

福莆仙志元堂是以奉祀三一教主為中心的綜合性廟宇，教主是莆田明代哲學家林兆恩先生（一五一七年至一五九八年），倡授教于明世宗嘉靖三十年，至今已有四百多年的歷史。

明萬歷年由門人黃宗祿、石霞、黃伯齊等人創建志元堂于石庭黃厝，後因清政府的截界遷民政策，使百姓的經濟遭至空前浩劫，幾乎十室九空。經過了一百多年的滄桑變幻、風雨侵蝕，年久失修，堪陋破爛。幾經興廢，在清光緒八年（一八八二年）由門人徐俊福、黃建杰等人擇地遷建，在石庭福廈大路靠北邊，俗稱頂店。其雕梁畫棟，金身神像莊嚴無比。廊接廂，廂圍殿，翹角興檐尾呼應，翠柳與蕉葉爭展舞姿，檐下的風鈴和牆頭的響獅比歌喉。寶殿上鮮花綴綴，金爐香檀冉冉，香客們虔誠膜拜不迭，好一處道門勝地、詩書之景。

日升月沉，斗（原文“鬥”）轉星移，一年復一年。到了民國三十年，即一九四一年，已經是抗日戰爭的艱難歲月。又遇到了罕見的春旱，大河的河床都已裂開了大縫嘴，給受苦受難又少衣短糧的百姓雪上加霜。眼巴巴望着春秧不能插上，毒辣辣的陽光毫不猶豫地直射在布滿皺紋的苦臉上。心急如焚的本堂門人整日在神座前祈禱，“救救百姓，下場雨吧”的呼聲在堂內迴響不息。終於有了回應。在三月下旬的一個早上，門人突然發現金斗（原文：鬥）公神的金身帶座向前移了約尺餘。眾覺的十分希奇，便焚香請乩，批示要出祈雨。眾大覺不解，天上毫無雲絲，前幾日又有好幾處兄弟宮出衙，都祈無半滴雨水。咱出若祈無雨，將是大丟顏面。然神乩又示：明日卯時，東邊若有烏鵲連叫三聲，即馬上出衙。第二天果是如此。於是聘請軍械官黃天佑披麻帶孝妝孝男，眾門徒一色白衣白褲，奉請徐大人和金斗（原文：鬥）公等尊神像出衙。上午八時許，祈雨的隊伍整齊而又嚴肅地出發了，一路上鈴鼓聲和祈雨的喧號聲連續不斷。隊伍經明德堂（俗稱菜烏寺），在中井澗的一個叫張公洞前停下，依神示往洞中取水，水中若有三條小魚即事成。門徒進入石洞約四五十丈，果有一小坑水。用盆在黑暗中隨便盛了盆水，出來一看，果有三條小魚在游。據說石洞裏臥著一條聾龍，要把它吵醒了才上天去興雲佈雨。於是年青的登上高處，撬下大石頭往下滾：年老的在洞穴前敲鑼打鼓。這石頭的滾動相碰聲、鑼鼓聲和山的回音聲驚天動地，終於吵醒了聾龍。十時許，本是萬里晴空，忽然從山背後升起一朵烏雲，並漸漸地增大，向四方擴張。一陣清涼風從山嵐間吹過，緊接着雷霹電閃，豆大的雨點隨風撒來。祈雨的隊伍冒着大雨由東向西繞，徐徐行走，邊走邊用松（原文：鬆）

樹枝沾着山洞穴裏取出的水拂向大地。沿路群眾冒雨解紅衣、摘斗（原文：鬥）笠，跪拜不迭。隊伍行到哪裏，甘雨就跟到那裏。當時惟恐泥塑神像雨水浸久會損壞，故在下午六時許就入衙。不久大雨就停往，可雨水已滿溝滿田了。神聖的赫靈眾口成碑，至今在老人心里還記憶猶新。

晃晃又過了二年，仲秋之時，連續的暴雨使江口後厝堰決堤了。茫茫的洪水淹沒了九里洋的所有莊稼地，逼使雞鴨上厝頂、棺材撞大門。洪水退後，可怕的鼠疫又迅速地吞沒着處在水深火熱中的貧民。眾門徒以救苦救難為己任，依神示採集青草藥方，治癒了不少的病人。時為求獲福祥、去災疫、還願酬神的紛至還來，真是香煙繚繞，鞭炮聲不斷。

至民國三十六年，旅居馬來西亞門人黃亞梓等為了朝夕奉祀教主，繼續倡導儒道釋三教合一，遵守明訓，以三綱五常為日用，入孝出悌為實履，仕農工商為常業，修之於家，行之天下，揚我中華樂善常施之美德，遂奉唐山志元堂香火于馬來西亞芙蓉坡。修建志元三教堂後，隨着輪船的穿梭來往，志元堂的香火就越傳越廣。

光陰似箭，日月如梭。解放後，破除迷信的大潮急速卷來，全國的虔誠事務馬上停滯。志元堂亦不能幸免。至一九六四年社教運動席卷全國，隨著驅僧廢寺、焚經毀像、破除迷信，堂內能動的不能動的財產被人為地瓜分了。廟宇漸夷平地，滿目淒涼。又經過十年浩劫尤甚。在破四舊立四新的吶喊聲中，志元堂從現實中消逝了祠宇的痕迹，但神明的威靈在信眾心上已深深留下烙印。

一九七九年撥亂反正以後，恢復貫徹宗教信仰自由政策，眾門人倡議重續香火。一九八〇年，旅居新加坡信士黃秋桂、黃文理，馬來亞門人黃亞梓等人多次回國倡議重建新堂址。經反復研究，最終選在石庭石東村霞度段，選舉以新興第一屆堂主黃華蓉為首的董事會負起重建事宜，于一九八三年農曆三月初四日全面施工。人眾踴躍，捐資的、出力的，眾心成誠。當進展中途時，經濟上發生了拮据（原文：結據）。議論紛紛，愁腸百結不得一解。信士黃秋桂得知後慷慨解囊，奉出人民幣壹萬三仟元捐獻給志元堂，以中流砥柱之氣概解工程燃眉之急，使主殿順利進展，初具規模。一九八六年十一月十三日舉行開光告竣，在十五日第一屆持戒入了壇。續下在八七年十月廿六日第二屆持戒：八八年十一月初四日第三屆持戒，並作了法事預修。緊接着又緊鑼密鼓地開始籌備前座的建造事宜。一九九一年動土。經努力工作，得到了印尼、新加坡、馬來西亞、臺灣、香港、澳門及內地善男信女的協力資助，建前殿工程如流水般地進行。九三年四月，由印尼信女陳關美英合家敬題，一對高聳雲霄的木制旗杆豎立起來了，四色的彩旗在祥煙瑞氣中飄揚着。由福清東岙信士陳國成敬題一條百米多長的石

板志元路，印尼黃妹英合家敬題的一座露天戲臺，和海外僑胞捐建的霞度橋和另一座露天戲臺相繼完工。在九三年八月初八日，前殿舉行開光告竣。初十日四行持戒閉了壇。在省市縣宗教事務領導的關心和支持下，於一九九四年九月初十日成立了本市第一家道教管委會，同時並成功地舉辦了書畫展覽。

為了紀念在解放戰爭中光榮犧牲的先烈和超度一些非正常死亡的男女們，應廣大善信的迫切要求，于九四年十一月廿四日由國內外善信的大力資助、兄弟宮殿諸道友的盡力協助下，歷經三天的大型目連超度在和尚道士的一片鉸鏘聲中拉開了帷幕。“貧無怨，富無驕，依本份信行俱成佛道；父言慈，子言孝，得一門和順便是天堂”的大對聯高貼在目連戲臺上。臺上的鎮棚大爺擺手點頭，彷彿頻頻地在勸世人要多行善事少作奸邪。鬼屋裏的燭光一閃一閃着，好像在向人們訴說著他們心裏的悔恨和平。陣陣的鉸鏘聲伴著梵唱聲，在祈禱著國昌民康、永遠和平。最後在功德的仙曲和鞭炮聲中，目連法事已功成圓滿了，人們盼望多年的宿願也圓了夢。

春去秋來，一九九七年經神示，于八月初四日辛時第五屆修持法戒在一片熱鬧聲中開始了。參加持戒的還有旅居異國他鄉的道友和來賓，他們都懷著一顆熾熱的愛國主義和虔誠的心，擠出寶貴的時間回國朝拜和觀摩。東邊戲臺上由兄弟宮的董事們精心設計和佈置的行宮如宮殿般地輝煌和莊嚴，肅然起敬，由感而生。初六日，在行宮進行了巡狩前的開衙儀式。早晚，肆筵官在八班唱堂聲中站堂和退堂。持戒經九天，于十三日卯時在禮炮興、鑼鼓爭鳴、歌樂跟仙曲齊奏、煙花爆竹閃爍中啟開了壇門。眾門徒在神童的率領下，整齊有序地手執彩旗步出堂門參方拜門。八時，巡狩隊伍在摩托車隊的開路下前進了。有各村的車鼓隊、八樂隊、宮樂隊、十音隊妝扮成唐宋元明清故事的彩車開路，將軍炮、文書、旗牌官，掃街的、隨香的、騎馬的、走路的，各自去完成他們所扮演的差命。大旗、文昌旗、龍虎旗、五方十斗（原文：門）旗、彩旗，香亭十二太保、神馬、看馬，勸世人多做善事的十形十惡隊，黑衣黃衣八班香童，八羅轎、鑾駕轎等搖晃而過，滔滔不絕。浩浩蕩蕩的隊伍排成有四里多長，鑼鼓喧天，仙歌嘹亮，所經之處香煙環繞、禮炮鳴放，一片升平景象。下午六時許，在轎童急路下進入了殿中。眾心所望幾十年的巡狩終於現實了。

在二〇〇一年閏四月初第一屆堂主黃華蓉逝世後，全體教下同意、神明恩准，一致推選德高望重的壇長黃玉林為新興第二屆堂主，並主持了關於後殿因座體較低重新改建的工作。經神示擇取（原文：諭）了當年八月廿日動土，精選杉木代替水泥通樑重新立柱，上樑雕龍刻鳳、描金彩紅，給裏表煥然一新。在〇二年七月十五

日舉行告竣進殿儀式。進貢的禮炮硝煙剛剛散去，經神擇取吉日，第六屆持戒事務又籌備開始了。在國內外善男信女的舉善如湧、廣種福田之下，於○二年十一月十三日申時，在一片悠雅的仙歌、響遏行雲的鑼鼓、雷鳴般的禮炮聲中關閉了壇門。彩旗和紅燈成行地搖舞，在向香客們歡迎致禮。色燈、霓虹燈以炫耀的光彩向善信們致以美好的祝願和深情的祝福。散醮後，又緊鑼密鼓地醞釀著無極殿建設的規範。○三年二月初，無極殿破土動工了。經善信們的虔誠造福、集腋成裘、集思廣益，終於，一座輝煌無比的宮殿完工了。金光閃閃的神像、栩栩如生的壁畫、婀娜多姿的雕刻、巧奪天工的油彩。殿與廊相鄰，廊和鐘樓相連。青龍對滾，彩鳳相舞。美觀大方、花樣整齊的石埕棋布。奇花異草美哉輪焉，美哉奂焉。香煙常繞，如步入仙景。○四年十一月十八日舉行開光告竣慶典。值卯時，天朗氣清，惠風和暢。二枝通天大燭火焰如柱，香煙瑞氣集成祥雲圍繞廟宇。諸神像在鑼鼓鞭炮聲和道士的喧號聲中莊嚴而有序地開了慧眼。十九日，在歡送嘉賓後，無極殿的宏業就成功圓滿了。

○五年鐘聲後，堂主黃玉林又運籌帷幄。正月間，西邊鼓樓地又動土了。曾經一輪生相的風雨侵蝕，一對木制旗杆已搖搖欲墜。神示於本年五月初八日，在圍牆外按古時小條水溝前擇地重新動土。十月初二日吉時，一對石質天山紅、由三節組成、高十六米餘、雄偉壯觀的旗杆屹立在堂前。是日風伯為之收起長扇，雲婆放下廣袖。只見那瑞氣在柱邊冉冉升起，彩雲在旗門下輕飄而過，呈現出一片呈祥的景象。西邊的鼓樓連古壇廳也在繁忙而有序地忙碌着。在國內外善信的熱心資助下，經石泥木油、雕刻工匠師的精細製作下，在○六年六月間，一座與東邊建築群相輝映、美輪美奐的仿古建築群落成了。鐘鼓兩樓猶如兩位忠誠的衛士守護在堂的兩側，翹角好像舉手向虔誠的香客們問安敬禮，不時悅耳的喜鵲聲在向善信們報以吉祥喜訊。

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GLOSSARY

Aixuan 艾軒
Anxi 安溪
Aocheng 驩城
Baban 八班
Baidu 白杜
Baitang Qiangou 白塘前沟
Baiya jiangjun 白牙將軍
Baiya zhongjun 白牙中君
Baogongan 报功庵
Baogongci 报功祠
Baojia 保甲
Baojuan 寶卷
Beichenggong 北辰宮
Beidouxi 北斗戲
Beigao 北高
Beitou 陂頭
Beiyang 北洋
Beiyouji 北游記
Benji 本寂
Bianshen 變身
Biezi 別子
Cai 蔡
Cai Xiang 蔡襄
Caidai (Cai dike) 蔡埭
Caidai Shudetang 蔡埭樹德堂
caihua 採花
Caizhai 蔡宅
Caizhai Daonanci 蔡宅道南祠
Caoshan 曹山
Changle 長樂
Changtai 常泰
Changxi 長溪
Chaozhou 潮州
Chen 陳
Chendai 陳埭
Chen Guan Meiying 陳關美英
Chen Guocheng 陳國成
Chen Ji 陳汲
Chen Jingbang 陳經邦
Chen Jinggu 陳靖姑
Chen Jun 陳俊
Chen Lexuan 陳樂軒
Chen Maorui 陳茂瑞
Chen mound 陳墩
Chen Renbi 陳仁壁
Chen Shengshao 陳盛韶
Chenshi zhenren 陳氏真人
Chen Wenlong 陳文龍

Chen Yuanguang 陳元光
 Chen Zheng 陳政
 Chen Zhida 陳智達
 Chendun 陳墩
 Cheng Yi 程頤
 Chengjiao 城郊
 Chengshan Sanxianshengci 城山三先生祠
 Chengzhu 澄渚
 Chi Huangdi 赤皇帝
 Chijie 持戒
 Chixishan 赤溪山
 Chongfushè 崇福社
 Chongqin 冲沁
 Chongshengan 崇聖庵
 Chongren 崇仁
 Chongren gaoshi 崇仁高士
 Ciji zhenren 慈濟真人
 Cishi 刺史
 Cishou yuantian 慈壽 院田
 Citong 刺桐
 Cuifu dama 崔府大妈
 cun 村
 Dabenci 大本祠
 dai 墓
 Daili 墓里
 Daishengli 待聖里
 daitian 墓田
 Daiyun shan 戴雲山
 Dakui 大魁
 Damenjia 大門甲
 Danmin 罷民
 Daonanci 道南祠
 Daoshi 道士
 Daren 大人
 Dazongbodi 大宗伯第
 Dehua 德化
 Dejutang 德聚堂
 Dian 殿
 Dianqiandu zhigan 殿前都制幹
 Dingdian 頂店
 Dong Shi 童史
 Dong Yingliang 董應亮
 Dongchun shangshè 東春上社
 Donghu Shutang 東湖書堂
 Donghua 東華
 Dongjiao 東角
 Dongli jiashé 東里家社
 Dongpo 東坡
 Dongli Huang 東里黃
 Dongmei 東美
 Dongsha 東沙
 Dongshantang 東山堂
 Donghu Shrine 東湖祠
 Dongtian 東田

Dongtou 洞頭
 dongxi nanbei shè 東西南北社
 Dongxiang 東廡
 Dongyang 東陽
 Dongyuan 東源
 Dongyueguan 東嶽觀
 Dongzhi 冬至
 Du Yin 杜引
 dun 墉
 Duotou 哮頭
 Dutian yuanshuai 都天元帥
 Duweitou 度圍頭
 Eastern Cai dike 東蔡埭
 Fahui 法會
 Fang 方
 Fang Cipeng 方次彭
 Fang dike 方埭
 Fang Hui 方會
 Fang Jun 方峻
 Fang Baomo 方寶謨
 Fang Qiao 方嶢
 Fang Renrui 方仁瑞
 Fang Renxun 方仁遜
 Fang Renyi 方仁逸
 Fang Renyuan 方仁遠
 Fang Renyue 方仁嶽
 Fang Renzai 方仁載
 Fang Rudiao 方汝調
 Fang Shixian 方士繇
 Fang Sicheng 方寺丞
 Fang Tingfan 方廷範
 Fang Xiaoru 方孝孺
 Fang Yanfan 方延范
 Fang Zhonghui 方忠惠
 Fangxiang 方巷
 Fangxiangshi 方相氏
 Fatian Zhang shengjun 法天張聖君
 Fatong 法通
 Faxin 法心
 Fazhu xianfei 法主仙妃
 Feiying 蜚英
 Fenghuo erlang 風火二郎
 Fengjian 封建
 fenglu 封路
 Fengting 枫亭
 Feng Zhiru 馮智日
 fenshè 分社
 Fo Dao Lusi 佛道錄司
 Fude dongshe 福德東社
 Fude xishé 福德西社
 Fude zhengshen 福德正神
 Fuhuitang 福惠堂
 Fujian 福建
 Fuqing 福清

Fushan 浮山
 Fushou 福首
 Futang 福唐
 Futong 扶童
 Fuxingshè 福興社
 Fuxingtang 福興堂
 Fuxing xishè 福興西社
 Fuzhou 福州
 Fuzhou Fengchi 福州鳳池
 Gao Wen 高文
 gaogong 高功
 Gaojiang 告江
 Gengba 耕霸
 Gengyuan 耕原
 Gongdeyuan 功德院
 gongshen 貢生
 Gongying tongzi 供應童子
 Gongzheng 公正
 Gongzhuo 公著
 Goushang 沟上
 Gouxi 沟西
 Guanchi 關持
 Guandi 關帝
 Guanghua 廣化
 Guanghuasi 廣化寺
 Guanghuasi Fatang hall 廣化寺法堂
 Guanghui gong 廣惠宮
 Guangrenmiao 廣仁廟
 Guangye 廣業
 Guangze zunwang 廣澤尊王
 Guangzhou Gushi 光州固始
 Guanjie 關戒
 Guanmenjiao 關門教
 Guanyin 觀音
 Guanyin dashi 觀音大士
 Guchengong 谷城宮
 Gucuo 古厝
 Gufengsi 鼓峰寺
 Guo 郭
 Guo Yingpin 郭應聘
 Guoguan 過關
 Guohuan chansi 國權禪寺
 Guoqing 國清
 Gushansi 鼓山寺
 gushe 吉社
 Gushi 固始
 Gutian 古田
 Hanjiang 潺江
 Hanjiangtang 潺江堂
 Hanjiang Houdu 潺江後度
 Hanjiang Longjinshè temple 潺江龍津社
 Hanjiang Shaban 潺江沙阪
 Hanjiang Xinyoushe 潺江新有社
 Haopu lishè 浩浦里社

Haopushê 濠浦社
 Haotian dizi 吳天帝子
 He 何
 He dike 何埭
 He Qiaoyuan 何喬遠
 Hengtang 橫塘
 Houdai 後埭
 Houguan 候官
 Houtian dizi 吳天帝子
 Houtingjia 後亭甲
 Houtu furen 后土夫人
 Houzhuo 後卓
 Huace 花冊
 Huang Gan 黃幹
 Huang Huarong 黃華蓉
 Huang Meiying 黃妹英
 Huang Lian 黃濂
 Huang Shigui 黃世規
 Huang Ji 黃績
 Huang Yanhui 黃彥輝
 Huang Yao 黃謠
 Huang Yazi 黃亞梓
 Huang Yulin 黃玉琳
 Huangcuo 黃厝
 Huangshi 黃石
 Huangxiang 黃巷
 Huangzhai 黃宅
 Huaqiao 華僑
 Huating 華亭
 Huayanshan mountain 华巖山
 Hugongshan mountain 壺公山
 Huiji shenghou 惠濟聖侯
 Huizong 徽宗
 hukou 戶口
 Hunantang 湖南堂
 Hushan shutang 湖山書堂
 Hushi 筏石
 jia 甲
 Jiamiao 家廟
 Jianfu Ganfuyuan 薦福院
 Jiangdong 江東
 Jiangdong Pukougong 江東浦口宮
 Jiangkou 江口
 Jiangkou Shiting 江口石庭
 Jiao 酱
 Jiao 蛟
 jiaohua 教化
 Jiashou 甲首
 Jiaxingdian 嘉興殿
 Jiaxingshê 嘉興社
 Jiazu 家族
 jienei 界內
 jiewai 界外
 Jifushê 集福社

Jindetang 金德堂
 Jing 境
 Jingtangjiao 經堂教
 Jingxiangsi 景祥寺
 Jingyangci 景祥祠
 Jinshangong 金山宮
 Jinshi 進士
 Jintangjiao 金堂教
 Jintongjiao 金童教
 Jinxiangpai 進香牌
 Jiulidong 九鯉洞
 Jiulihu 九鯉湖
 Jiuliyang 九里洋
 Jiumu Lin 九牧林
 Jiutian Tiangong yuanshuai 九天田公元帥
 Jixiang dajiang 吉祥大將
 Junshou 郡守
 Juren 舉人
 kaijing 開經
 Kang 康
 Kang Gongyuanshuai 康公元帥
 Kang Youwei 康有為
 Kanggong yuanshuai 康公元帥
 Ke 柯
 Ke Weiqi 柯維騏
 keju 科舉
 Kengbeitang 坑北堂
 Kengzhi 坑治
 Ketang 可塘
 Kong Daren 孔大人
 Kuaiji 會稽
 Kuidou xingjun 魁斗星君
 Kuokou 關口
 Lanpen 蘭盆
 Lai (he) 瀨(河)
 Lei Wu 雷五
 Lei Yinglong 雷應龍
 Li 李
 li 里
 Li Chongxiao 李崇孝
 Li Chongyu 李崇余
 Li Dan 李丹
 Li Fu 李富
 Li Hong 李宏
 Li Guangchao 林光朝
 Li Junfu 李俊甫
 Li Puhui 李普惠
 Lin Run 李潤
 Li Xiong 李熊
 Li Zhangzhe 李長者
 Li Zhen 黎畛
 Li Zhigan 李制幹
 Li Zhisheng 李志升
 Liang Puyao 梁普耀

Liangcuo 梁厝
 Lianjiang 連江
 Libenci 立本祠
 Lidai gutan 歷代古壇
 lijia 里甲
 Lin 林
 Lin Aixuan 林艾軒
 Lin Bangjun 林邦俊
 Lin Chang 林昌
 Lin Congshi 林從世
 Lin Tan 林坦
 Lin Guangchao 林光朝
 Lin Jun 林俊
 Lin Longjiang 林龍江
 Lin Lu 林祿
 Lin Pi 林披
 Lin reservoir 林塘
 Lin Tao 林韜
 Lin Xiyi 林希逸
 Lin Xuantai 林玄泰
 Lin Yangcheng 林仰成
 Lin Yizhi 林亦之
 Lin Yonghe 林用和
 Lin Youheng 林有恒
 Lin Youshou 林有守
 Lin Zhao'en 林兆恩
 Lin dai 林埭
 Lindun 林墩
 Ling 靈
 Lingchuan 靈川
 Lingcigong 靈慈宮
 Lingxianmiao 靈顯廟
 Lingyan 靈巖
 Lingyinshè 靈隱社
 Lisheng 禮生
 Lishetan 里社壇
 Lishou 里首
 Litan 廣壇
 Liu 劉
 Liu Kezhuang 劉克莊
 Liu Pin 劉玭
 Liu Shao 劉韶
 Liu Shenghou 劉聖侯
 Liucuo Kengbei 劉厝坑北
 Liugong shenghou 柳公聖侯
 Liugong yuanshuai 劉公元帥
 Lizhang 里長
 Longhua 龍華
 Longhua jiao 龍華教
 Longpo 龍坡
 Longshangong 龍山宮
 Longyoutang 隆佑堂
 Lord Chongyi 崇儀公
 Lufu dashen 魯府大神

Lufu furen 魯府夫人
 Lufu yima 魯府姨妈
 Lufu zhenjun 魯府真君
 Lujiao 魯醮
 Lushan 廬山
 Lüshan 閩山
 Lushan Dafayuan 廬山大法院
 Lushanjiao 廐山教
 Luxi 莒溪
 Luxi 魯戲
 NB: the character Lu is written with the illness radical in the Putian plain indicating that this is the Bureau of Smallpox.
 Ma Yuanshuai 馬元帥
 Mayang 馬洋
 Mazu 嫣祖
 Meifengsi 梅峰寺
 Meifengtang 梅鳳堂
 Meizhou 湄洲
 Menghua 蒙化
 mianding 免丁
 Miaoying 妙應
 Miaoying fashi 妙應法師
 Min 閩
 Min Yue 閩越
 Ming Shizong 明世宗
 Ming Taizu 明太祖
 Mingandan 明安殿
 Mingde Hall 明德堂
 Mingxia 明夏
 Mingzhu zunwang 明主尊王
 Mixin 迷信
 Mulan 木蘭
 Mulan bei 木蘭陂
 Mulian 目連
 Nanan Weir 南安陂
 Nancheng 南埕
 Nangshan Cishousi 囊山慈壽寺
 Nangshansi 囊山寺
 Nanji 南箕
 Nanmen 南門
 Nanputo 南普陀
 Nanshan 南山
 Nanshan Guanghuasi 南山廣化寺
 Nanri 南日
 Nanyang 南洋
 Neidai 內埭
 Nenggan 能幹
 Nipo 露坡
 Ou Xiangu 歐仙姑
 Pan Bing 潘炳
 Pangu dijun 盤古帝君
 Pei Ceyuan 裴次元
 Peng 彭
 Peng Shao 彭韶

Penglai, 蓬萊
 Pinghai 平海
 Poyang 鄱陽
 pu 鋪
 Puban 蒲阪
 Pudu 普度
 Puguang 普光
 Pukou 蒲口
 Pumenan 普門庵
 Puneng 普能
 Pushan 普善
 Putian 莆田
 Puxi 莆禧
 Puxianhua 莆仙話
 Qiandai 前埭
 Qianshi shengfei 錢氏聖妃
 Qiaodoutang 僑兜堂
 Qiaotouwai 橋頭外
 Qiaoxi 橋西
 Qigancuo 旗杆厝
 qijing 七境
 Qingjiang 清江
 Qingjingtan 清靜壇
 Qingming 清明
 Qingshui zushi 清水祖師
 Qingyuan 清源
 Qingzhong 清中
 Qinhou 沁後
 Qiongyaojiao 瓊瑤教
 Qi Jiguang 戚繼光
 Qitian dasheng 齊天大聖
 Qiwei 岐尾
 Quanzhou 泉州
 Qujiang 曲江
 Quqiao 渠橋
 Quzhou 衢州
 Rendetang 仁德堂
 Rimingtan 日明壇
 Rulai 如來
 Ruli 如理
 Sancheng jiupin fahui 三乘九品法會
 Sandian zhenjun 三殿真君
 Sanguan dadi 三官大帝
 Sannai 三奶
 Sanping zushi 三坪祖師
 Sanqingdian 三清殿
 Sanyi 三一
 Sanyi jiaozhu 三一教主
 Sanzhangcuo 三張厝
 Shadi 沙堤
 Shali Xiapu 沙里下鋪
 Shangfang 上方
 Shanglin 上林
 Shangsheng monastic estate 上生院田

Shangshensi 上生寺
 Shangxiang 上庠
 Shangyu 上俞
 Shanmei 山美
 Shanxiang 善鄉
 Shadi 沙堤
 She 畜
 she 社
 shècang 社倉
 shegong 設供
 Sheng 聖
 Shengdun 聖墩
 Shengfei Temple 聖妃宮
 Shengshouyuan 聖壽院
 Shengxing yishé 盛興義社
 Shéjitan 社稷壇
 Shemiao 社廟
 shentong 神童
 Shenxiao Wanshougong 神霄萬壽宮
 Shenyinqing 神應境
 Shepu 畜鋪
 shéxué 社學
 shí 石
 Shicheng 石城
 Shidafu 士大夫
 Shidong 石東
 Shihua bei 使華陂
 Shijia mouni 釋迦牟尼
 Shishan 詩山
 Shishisi 石室寺
 Shiting 石庭
 Shitinggong 石庭宮
 Shiting Xincuopu 石庭新厝鋪
 Shixi 石西
 Shoushan 壽山
 Shudeci 樹德祠
 Shudetang 樹德堂
 Shuinan 水南
 Shunji 順濟
 Shunzhi 順治
 Shuyuan 書院
 Sidian 祀典
 Sima shengwang 司馬聖王
 Song 宋
 Songban 松阪
 Sun Wukong 孫悟空
 Sun zushi 孫祖師
 suona 噴呐
 Tadou 塔兜
 Taiping Tianguo 太平天國
 Taiping Weir 太平陂
 Taishang Laozu 太上老祖
 Taiyi xiangu 太乙仙姑
 Taizu 太祖

Talin 塔林
 Tanban 壇班
 tang 塘
 tang 堂
 Tang Wuzong 唐武宗
 Tang Xuanzong 唐宣宗
 Tangbei 塘北
 Tangtou 塘頭
 Tanhuayuan 探花院
 Tawei 塔尾
 Tiangong yuanshuai 田公元帥
 Tianfei 天妃
 Tianhou 天后
 Tianmatang 天馬堂
 Tianqian shengmu 天前聖母
 Tianqingguan 天清觀
 Tianshan 天山
 Tianshang shengmu 天上聖母
 Tianwei 田尾
 Tianxia 田下
 Tianzhongyang 田中央
 Tingli 庭里
 Tongjigong
 Tongtian shennu 通天聖母
 Tongying 通應
 toufu 頭福
 tu 圖
 Tuanlian 團練
 Tuanlianshi 團練使
 Tudigong 土地公
 Waidai 外埭
 Waixindai 外新埭
 Wang 王
 Wang Baolong 王保隆
 Wang Chengguang 成光王仙師
 Wang Kanggong 王康功
 Wang Shenzhi 王審知
 Wang Yangming's 王陽明
 Wang Zuotang 王左塘
 Wangjiangli 望江里
 Wang Yanjun 王延鈞
 Wangye 王爺
 Wanshougong 萬壽宮
 Wei reservoir 魏塘
 Weixiandian 威顯殿
 Weixianmiao 威顯廟
 Weixiantang 威顯堂
 wen daochang 文道場
 Wen Tianxiang 文天祥
 Wenfeng 文峰
 Weng 翁
 Wengong yuanshuai 溫公元帥
 Wenli 文里
 Wenchang 文常

Wenchang dijun 文昌帝君
 Wenyuandian 文元殿
 Wu 吳
 Wu Chaoqi 吳朝器
 Wu Zhongyun 吳仲允
 Wu daochang 武道場
 Wu Jiutao 吳九濤
 Wu Xing 吳興
 Wuben 倔本
 Wubuliuce 五部六冊
 Wudangshan 武當山
 Wudunyang 吳墩洋
 Wuhuang 五皇
 Wuiao 無了
 Wusheng 武盛
 Wusheng laomu 無生老母
 Wutaishan 五臺山
 Wutang 梧塘
 Wutang Xilin 梧塘西林
 Wuxianmiao 五顯廟
 Xiaban 下阪
 Xiadai 下埭
 Xiadu 下度
 Xiadun 下墩
 Xiaduwei 下度尾
 Xiagao 霞皋
 Xiagao 下皋
 Xialin 下林
 xiang 鄉
 xiangbing 鄉兵
 xiangdenghui 香燈會
 Xiangli 巷利
 Xianglong fushê 香龍福社
 Xiangshan 香山
 Xiangshan 象山
 Xiangyingmiao 祥應廟
 Xiangyue 鄉約
 Xianhui hou 顯惠候
 Xianjimiao 顯濟廟
 Xiantian jiao 先天教
 Xianxi 仙溪
 Xiandetang 賢德堂
 Xianyou 仙游
 Xiaogouwei 小沟尾
 Xiaohu 孝戶
 Xiaoyi lishê altar 孝義里社
 xiaozong 小宗
 Xiapi 下邳
 Xiawuni 夏午尼
 Xidu 西都
 Xihong 西洪
 Xijiang 西江
 Xinan shoushê 新安壽社
 Xindian 新店

Xindun 新墩
 Xinfengdai 新豐埭
 Xinghua 興化
 Xingtai 興泰
 Xinxian Chenghuangmiao 新縣城隍廟
 Xinxiangtang 信香堂
 Xishi 西施
 Xitianwei 西天尾
 Xitou 溪頭
 Xiucuai 秀才
 Xiushitang 修史堂
 Xiuyu 秀屿
 Xiyuojì 西遊記
 Xizhaishan 西宅山
 Xizhang Houpushe 西漳濠浦社
 Xizhu 西洙
 Xu Daren 徐大人
 Xu Junfu 徐俊福
 Xu Yin 徐寅
 Xuanmiaojing 玄妙境
 Xuanmiaoguan 玄妙觀
 Xuantian shangdi 玄天上帝
 Xuqiao 徐橋
 Yamen 銜門
 Yang 楊
 Yang Yingshi 楊盈世
 Yangcheng 陽城
 Yangcheng Linshi Citang 陽城林氏祠堂
 Yangdai 洋埭
 Yanggong taishi 楊公太師
 Yangjiajiang 楊家將
 Yangwei 洋尾
 Yangzhong 洋中
 Yanhui Guo Shangxian 延慰郭尚先
 Yanshanzi 楊山子
 Yanshi 宴師
 Yanshou 延壽
 Yanshou bei 延壽陂
 Yanshouli 延壽里
 Yantieshi 鹽鐵使
 Yanxingli 延興里
 Yanzhou 延州
 Yao 姚
 Yao Feng 姚峰
 Yao Huang 姚凰
 Yao Silian 姚思廉
 Yao Tianming 姚天明
 Yao Wenyu 姚文余
 Yao Wenzho 姚文照
 Yao Xi 姚喜
 Yichengtang 意誠堂
 Yinghui 英惠
 Yingtang 影堂
 yinsi 淫祀

Yixintang 義信堂
 Yiyuantang 一源堂
 Yongchun 永春
 Yongfengli 永豐里
 Yongfu 永福
 Yongfutang 永福堂
 Yongquansi 涌泉寺
 Yongtai 永泰
 Yongxing houshê 永興後社
 Yongxing qianshê 永興前社
 Yongxing yishê 永興義社
 Yongxing zhongshê 永興中社
 You mound 游墩
 You reservoir 游塘
 Youdun 游墩
 Youyang 游洋
 Youzhengyan 檻貞巖
 Yu 余
 Yu Shan 余善
 Yu Zhao Guzai 余釗古宅
 Yuanchan 圓禪
 Yuangui 元規
 Yuanmiaoguan 元妙觀
 Yuanxi 愿戲
 Yuanxiao 元宵
 Yuanzhou 袁州
 Yue 越
 Yue Zheng 岳正
 Yuhu 玉湖
 Yuhuang dadi 玉皇大帝
 Yumingtang 玉明堂
 Yuxiu 預修
 Yu Yang 余颺
 Zeng 曾
 Zeng Fuchu 曾復初
 Zeng Gongliang Zeng 曾公亮
 Zeng Jing 曾鯈
 Zeng Yanming 曾彥明
 Zeng Yanshi 曾延世
 Zeng Yongchun 曾咏春
 Zeng Juzhai 曾矩齋
 Zhaijiao 齋教
 Zhaili 寨里
 zhang 丈
 Zhang 張
 Zhang Bafeng 張八峰
 Zhang Bao 張寶
 Zhang Daoxing 張道興
 Zhang Hongdu 張洪都
 Zhang Jing 張經
 Zhang Jiugao 張九皋
 Zhang Jiuling 張九齡
 Zhang Jiuzhang 張九章
 Zhang Mu 張睦

Zhang Qin 張琴
 Zhang sanfeng 張三峰
 Zhang Shijie 張世杰
 Zhang Zhangzhou 漳州
 Zhanggong 張公
 Zhanggong shengjun 張公聖君
 Zhangzhou 漳州
 Zhaofuyuan 招福院
 Zhaoxue 昭雪
 Zhejiang 浙江
 Zheng 鄭
 Zheng Chenggong 鄭成功
 Zheng dike 鄭埭
 Zheng Lu 鄭露
 Zheng Shu 鄭淑
 Zheng Yue 鄭岳
 Zheng Zhao 鄭昭
 Zhenkong 真空
 Zhenkong laozu 真空老祖
 Zhenming 振明
 Zhenqian 鎮前
 Zhenshangdong 鎮山洞
 Zhiyuantang 志元堂
 Zhongheyuan 中和院
 Zhonghuajia 中華甲
 Zhongyangcuo 中央曆
 Zhongzangan 中藏庵
 Zhou 周
 Zhou Dunyi 周敦頤
 Zhou Ren 周仁
 Zhu 朱
 Zhu Bajie 豬八戒
 Zhu Jingze 朱敬則
 Zhu Xi 朱熹
 Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋
 Zhu Zhe 朱浙
 Zhu Zongguan 朱總管
 Zhuiyuantang 追遠堂
 Zhuodai 卓埭
 Zhuo Wanchun 卓晚春
 Zhou Ying 周瑛
 Zilintang 紫林堂
 zizhi tuanti 自治團體
 Zunzhu mingwang 尊主明王
 zushe 祖社
 zuzhang 族長

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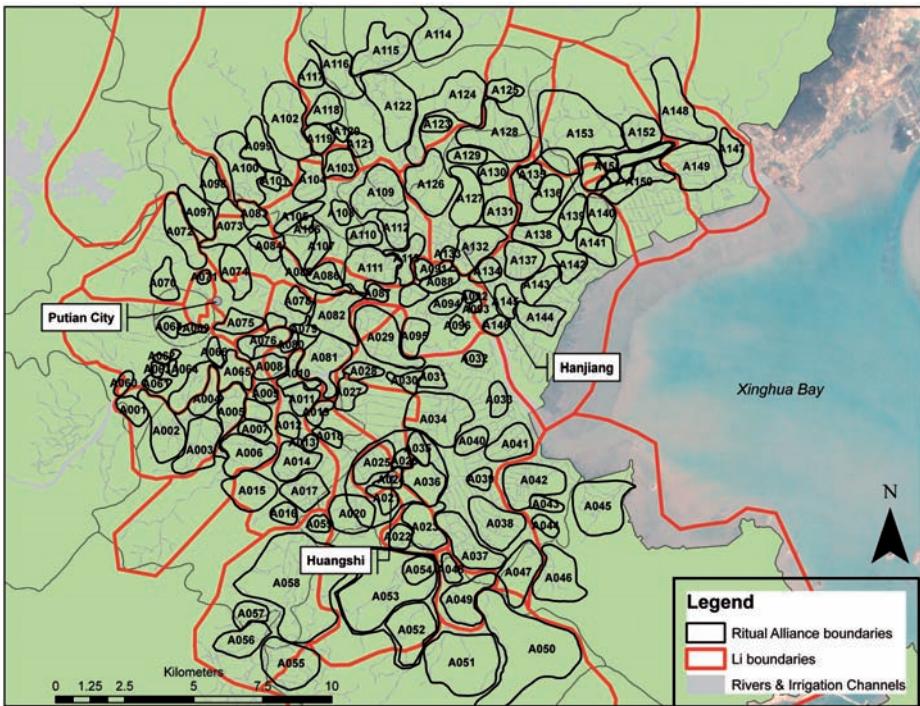
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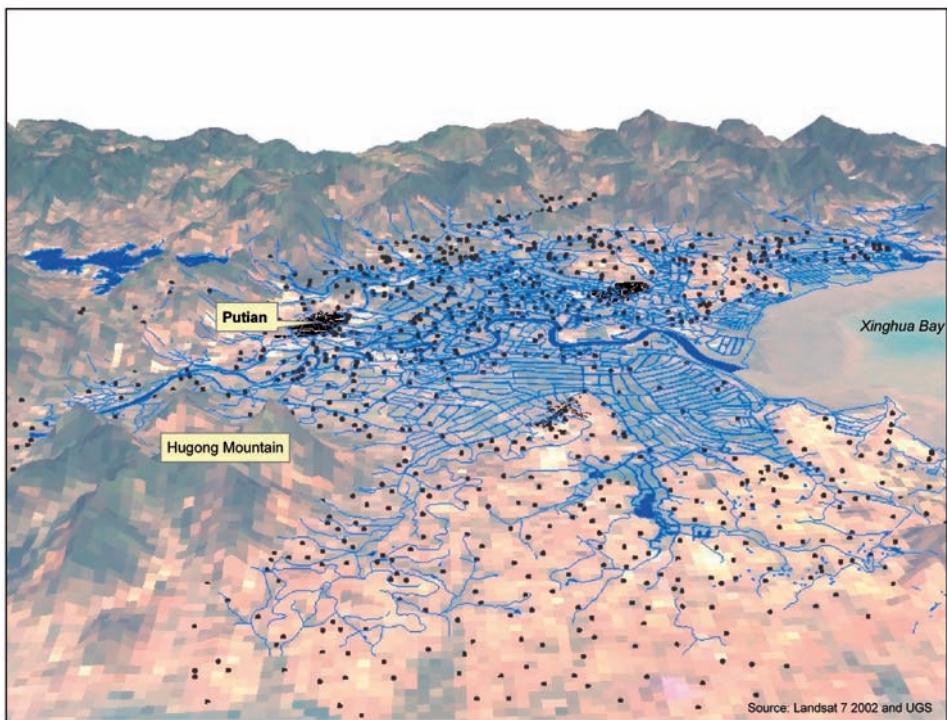
MAPS



Map 1: Satellite image of the Putian Plain with Major Rivers



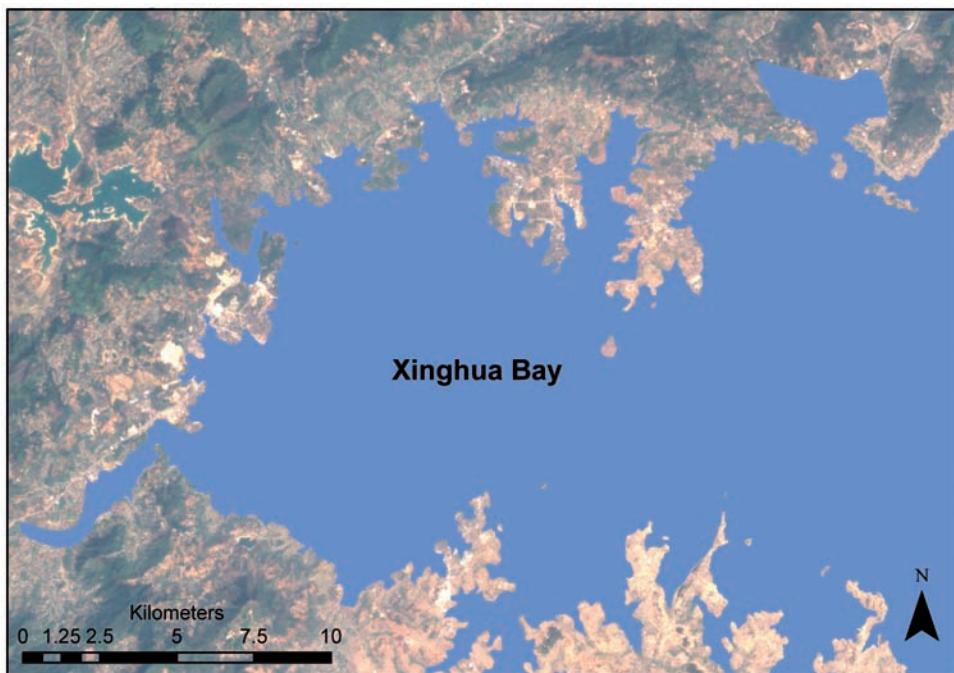
Map 2: The 153 Regional Ritual Alliances within the Li sub-cantons of the Putian Plain



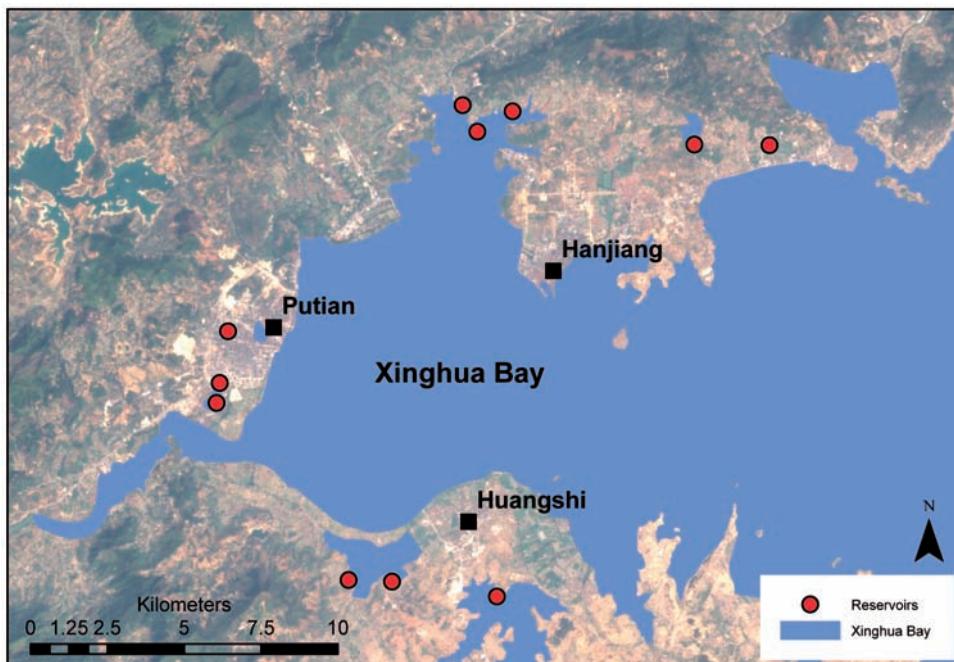
Map 3: 3D Model of the Irrigated Putian plain (looking north)



Map 4: 3D Model of the Irrigated Putian plain (looking east)

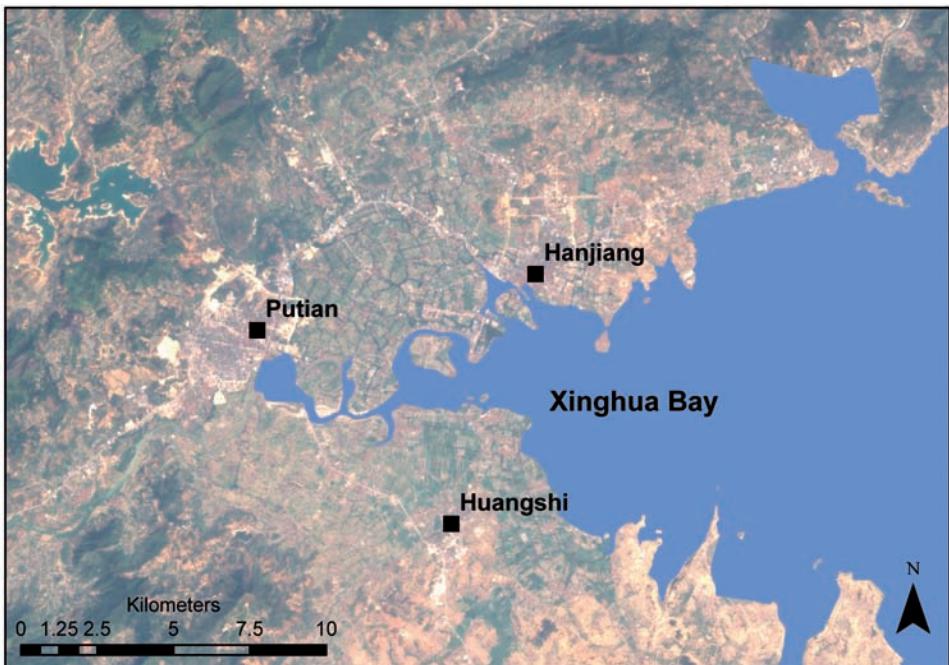


Map 5: Ancient shorelines of the Putian Plain



Source: Satellite Image: Landsat 7 2002.
Shorelines: Fujiansheng lishi dituji 2004; 212

Map 6: Tang shorelines of the Putian Plain

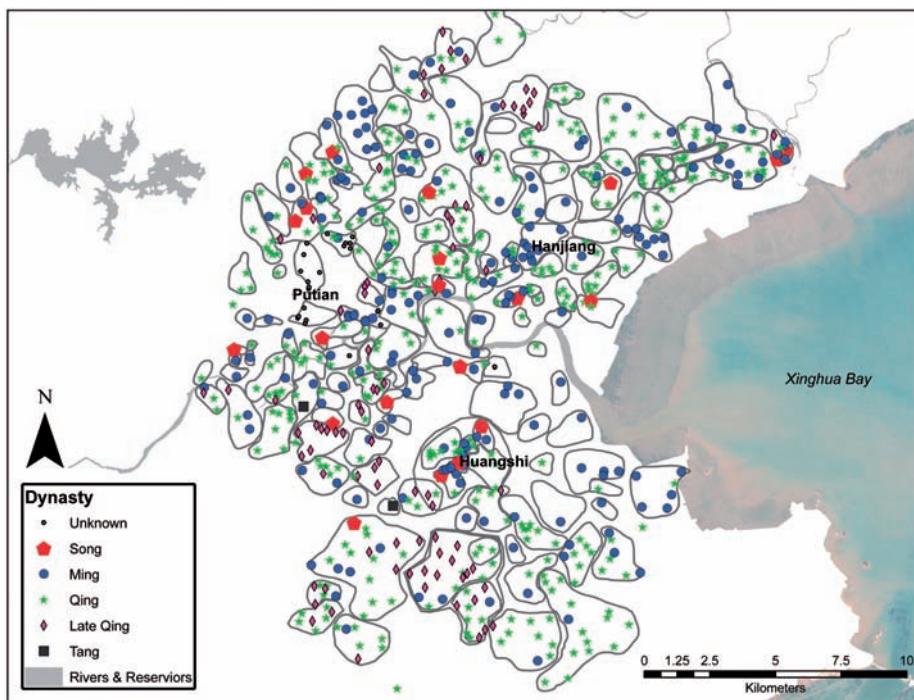


Map 7: Song shorelines of the Putian Plain

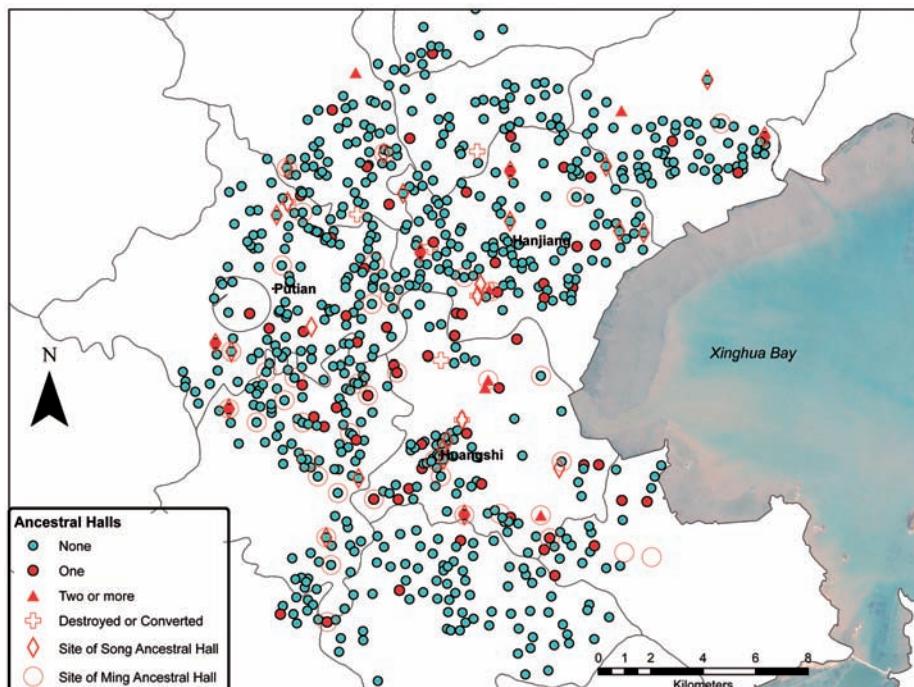


Source: Satellite Image: Landsat 7 2002,
Shorelines: Fujiansheng lishi dituji 2004; 212

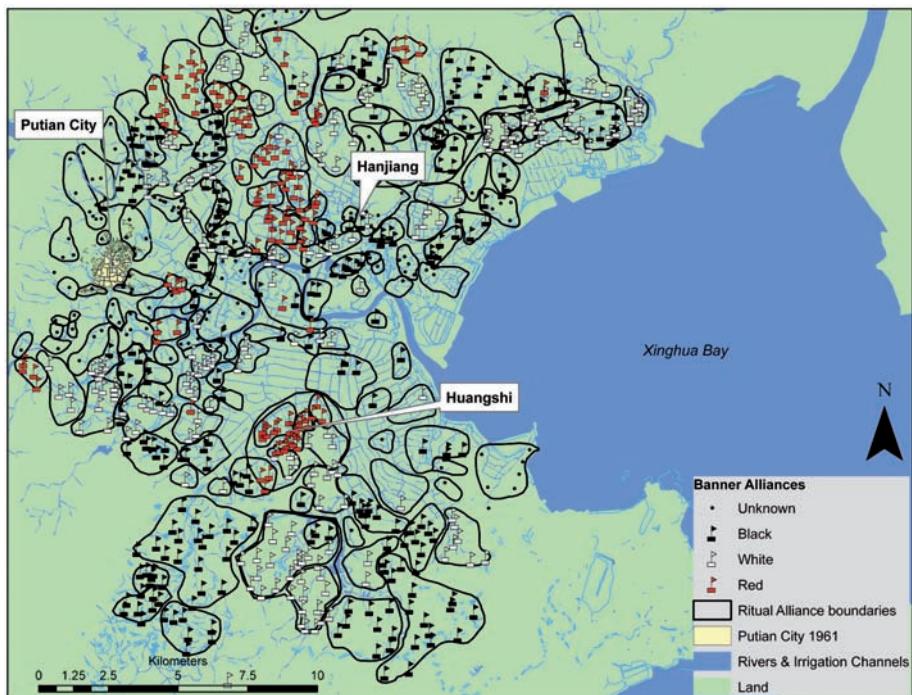
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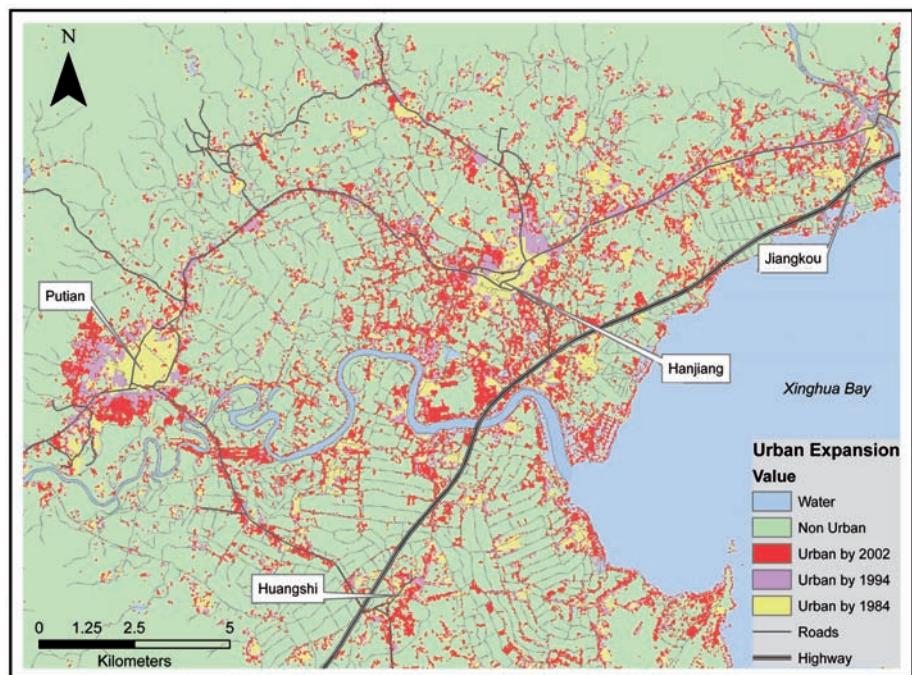
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Map 10: Ancestral Halls: including Song and Ming sites



Map 11: Feuding Banner alliances of the Putian Plain in the late Qing (19th century)



Source: Landsat 1984, 1994, 2002 Projection: WGS_1984_UTM_Zone_50

Map 12: Urban expansion in the Putian plains (1984-2002)

IMAGES



Image 1: spirit mediums wielding maces are carried in sedan chairs in Zhengtang



Image 2: spirit mediums and their altar associates perform an exorcistic dance before Shiting temple



Image 3: opera is presented to the gods and the people



Image 4: Eight Immortals from the stage worship the gods at Hanjiang City God Temple



Image 5A/B: Painted faces of the demon soldiers of several different neighborhood shê altars in a ritual near Huating



Image 6: linked benches with lanterns on top form a vast line for an evening procession



Image 7: young men race a god's sedan chair over a bonfire in a village near Huating



Image 8: offerings of pigs and a goat before a temple near Fengting



Image 9: A Daoist master blesses offerings to the gods



Image 10: female performing arts troupes travel in a procession near Zhuzhai



Image 11: a procession winds through a partially demolished village



Image 12: The baban (eight attendants) temple guard protect the gods on procession



Image 13: A Daoist ritual master burns a talisman before a placard of the route of the procession



Image 14: The Jiaocha temple in Nanmen, in the southern corner of Putian city



Image 15: Troupes bear sedan chairs with the names of the gods around bonfires



Image 16: village elders carry a sedan chair of the gods



Image 17: elderly women sweep the streets before the gods



Image 18: women in a marching band before the Xiaoyi temple in Jiangkou



Image 19: women carrying the goddess Mazu (Tianshang shengmu) in a sedan chair



Image 20: Portrait of a demon from the Underworld: his hat reads “Great Good Luck at one glance”



Image 21: An Immortal takes part in a procession



Image 22: A female opera singer joins the procession



Image 23: This demon from the Underworld belongs to a neighborhood earth god temple



Image 24: A spirit medium deep in trance



Image 25: Offerings to the gods are consumed by villagers after the ritual



Image 26: A master of Ceremonies directs the dance of the demons. The demon carries a plaque which reads Jinxiang “Presentation of Incense”



Image 27: a very young spirit medium leads an exorcistic dance at the Shiting Temple



Image 28: spirit mediums and altar assistant perform a complex line dance in Jiangkou



Image 30: the medium's back is covered with blood from the blows of the mace

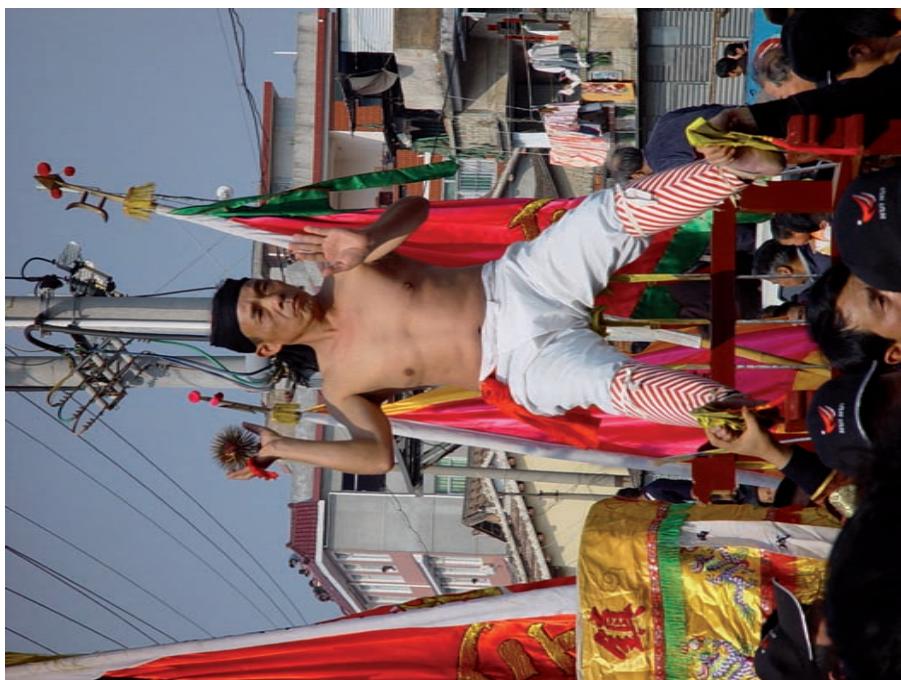


Image 29: a spirit medium on a sedan chair carries a mace made of nails



Image 31: Spirit mediums enter the flames of a Roman Candle to “pluck the flower (of fire)”



Image 32: A possessed spirit medium plucks the flowers of fire near Yangwei village